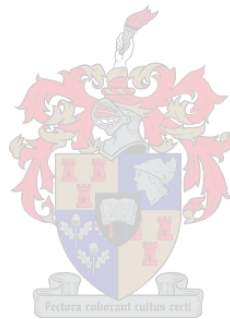


**THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST:  
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ANHYPOSTASIS AND ENHYPOSTASIS  
IN KARL BARTH'S CHRISTOLOGY**

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To my wife and children  
for their love and  
patience.

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## Opsomming:

Hierdie verhandeling is 'n kritiese analise van die belangrike rol wat die anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis van Christus se menslike natuur in Karl Barth se Christologie speel. Die studie bestaan uit vyf gedeeltes.

Eerstens ondersoek hierdie verhandeling die historiese ortodokse verstaan van die konsepte anhypostasis en enhypostasis om die menslike natuur van Christus te verduidelik, en die Chalcedoniese definisie van die twee nature in die patristieke, skolastiese en postskolastiese periodes te verdedig. Histories gebruik ortodokse skrywers anhypostasis en enhypostasis deurgaans as outonome konsepte, met enhypostasis wat verwys na die realiteit van Christus se menslike natuur in gemeenskap met die Logos, en anhypostasis wat verwys na die wyse waarop Christus se menslike natuur geen bestaansrealiteit los van hierdie gemeenskap het nie. Karl Barth gebruik beide anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis as 'n tweeledige formule om uitdrukking aan die menslike natuur van Christus te gee en gaan hiermee verder as die historiese ortodoksie posisie, wat 'n unieke eienskap van sy Christologie is.

Tweedens evalueer hierdie verhandeling Karl Barth se unieke interpretasie van die anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis van Christus se menslike natuur as 'n tweeledige en kongruente formule om te verduidelik hoe die menslikheid van Christus in samehang met Sy goddelike wese bestaan.

Derdens volg hierdie verhandeling die historiese ontwikkeling van anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis in Karl Barth se Christologie en die ontologiese funksie wat dit in Barth se ontwikkeling van die openbaring van Jesus Christus as die 'Woord wat Vlees geword het' verrig. In sy breek met liberale teologie beklemtoon Karl Barth dat die openbaring van God uitsluitlik in die persoon van Christus voorkom, en dat hierdie openbaring ontologies in die anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis van Christus se menslike natuur gegrond is.

Vierdens, identifiseer hierdie verhandeling die temas van vereniging tussen die goddelike en menslike nature van Christus, waar Barth Christus se menslike natuur as anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis in Sy rol as bemiddelaar van versoening tussen God en mens beskryf.

Vyfdens evalueer hierdie verhandeling Barth se kritiek op die Chalcedoniese definisie van die twee nature, wat uit sy verstaan van die anhypostasis *en* enhypostasis van Christus se menslike natuur voortspruit. Terwyl Barth wél Chalcedon aanvaar, wil hy graag op meer presiese wyse die eenheid van goddelike en menslike nature in Christus, as die handeling van God se openbaring as die Seun van die Mens in Sy verheerliking, beskryf.

**Abstract:**

This dissertation is a critical analysis of the significance that the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature play in Karl Barth's Christology. It does so in five parts.

First, this dissertation examines the historical orthodox understanding of the concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ, and defend the Chalcedon definition of the two natures in the patristic, scholastic, and post-scholastic periods. Historically, orthodox writers consistently express anhypostasis and enhypostasis as autonomous concepts, where enhypostasis refers to the reality of Christ's human nature in union with the Logos, and anhypostasis expresses Christ's human nature as having no subsistent reality outside its union with the Logos. Karl Barth appropriates anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to express the humanity of Christ, which moves beyond historical orthodoxy and is unique to his Christology.

Second, this dissertation evaluates Karl Barth's unique interpretation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as a dual and congruent formula to express how the humanity of Christ exists in union with His divine essence.

Third, this dissertation follows the historical development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in Karl Barth's Christology and its ontological function in Barth's development of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the 'Word became flesh'. In his break with liberal theology Karl Barth emphasizes that the revelation of God is made manifest exclusively in the person of Jesus Christ, which is ontologically grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

Fourth, this dissertation identifies the themes of coalescence between the divine and human natures of Christ where Barth expresses Christ's human nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in His role as the mediator of reconciliation between God and humanity.

Fifth, this dissertation evaluates Barth's critique of Chalcedon's definition of the two natures expressed through the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. While Barth does not disagree with Chalcedon, he desires to express more precisely the union of divine and human natures in Christ as the act of God's revelation, as the Son of Man, in His exaltation.



**Definitions:**

Anhypostasis: The first half of the dual formula intended to express the human nature of Jesus. The *anhypostasis* expresses the doctrine that the human nature of Jesus has no subsistence (an-hypostasis) apart from the union with the Logos.

Enhypostasis: The second half of the dual formula intended to express the human nature of Jesus. The *enhypostasis* expresses the doctrine that the human nature of Jesus has its being 'in' the subsistence (en-hypostasis) of the incarnate Son of God.

## Chapter One – Introduction

Karl Barth's theology continues to demand our attention well into the twenty-first century, and not without good reason. Barth's clear break with liberal theology and his unique Christological method still draws us to what he has to say about the person of Jesus Christ as the *revelation of God*. For Barth, Jesus Christ is indeed both the subject and object of divine revelation as the mediator of reconciliation between God and humanity. In this indissoluble union of human essence with the eternal Logos the man Jesus of Nazareth in fact 'becomes' one with the Logos of God.

“Jesus Christ very God and very man” does not mean that in Jesus Christ God and a man were really side by side, but it means that Jesus Christ, the Son of God and thus Himself true God, is also a true man. But this man exists inasmuch as the Son of God is this man—not otherwise... Thus the reality of Jesus Christ is that God Himself in person is actively present in the flesh. God Himself in person is the Subject of a real human being and acting. And just because God is the Subject of it, this being and acting are real.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Göttingen Dogmatics* (GD) and the *Church Dogmatics* (CD) Barth uniquely expresses the humanity of Christ ontologically as both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in its union with the divine Logos as the act of God to reveal Himself in the man Jesus of Nazareth. Anhypostasis expresses the human nature of Jesus as having no subsistence (an-hypostasis) apart from its union with the Logos, and the enhypostasis is used to express the human nature of Jesus as having its being 'in' the subsistence (en-hypostasis) of the incarnate Son of God.

Barth adopted the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the humanity of Christ based upon his reading of the dogmatics compilations of Heinrich Heppe (Reformed) and Heinrich Schmid (Lutheran) as he prepared for his first lectures on dogmatics given at Göttingen. Both Heppe and Schmid cite the scholastics in their use of these terms.

The patristic Fathers, and Lutheran and Reformed scholastics used the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain and defend the union of Christ's human nature with the divine Logos in their defense of Chalcedon's definition of the two natures of Christ as *very God and very man*.

Barth, however, adopted anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in a way that moves beyond the patristic Fathers and Scholastics. What protestant orthodoxy adopted as autonomous concepts to express

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. CD I/2, pp. 150-51.

the union of Christ's human nature with the Logos, Barth uniquely expresses as a dual ontological formula. For Barth, the human nature of Christ is both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in its union with the Logos.

Moreover, Barth's formulation of these concepts is not simply his unique way to express the incarnation of Christ, but is in fact the ontological basis for Barth's expression of the revelation of the Triune God in the person of Jesus Christ as the Mediator of reconciliation between God and humanity. Barth's construction of the humanity of Christ as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis provides his ontological grounding to express the convergence of time and eternity in Jesus of Nazareth in whom the reconciliation of humanity with God is accomplished *in His revelation*.

The unity of God and man in Christ is, then, the act of the Logos in assuming human being. His becoming, and therefore the thing that human being encounters in this becoming of the Logos, is an act of God in the person of the Word... This man Jesus Christ is identical with God because the Word became flesh in the sense just explained. Therefore He does not only live through God and with God. He is God Himself. Nor is He autonomous and self-existent. His reality, existence and being is wholly and absolutely that of God Himself, the God who acts in His Word.<sup>2</sup>

While it is generally recognized that the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis have a place in Karl Barth's Christology, there is little consensus as to the extent and significance that these concepts have in Barth's Christology as a whole.

This dissertation intends to clarify Karl Barth's unique appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as a dual ontological formula, and demonstrate the significance of Barth's appropriation of these terms in his Christology.

Firstly, the intent of this dissertation is to examine the historical orthodox understanding of the concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis used by the patristic Church Fathers, and the Lutheran and Reformed scholastics juxtaposed against Karl Barth's own interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in order to establish points of agreement and disagreement. This is important to understand in view of Barth's appeal to historical orthodoxy for his own interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in his Christology.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 162.

Secondly, the intent of this dissertation is to evaluate Barth's interpretation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as expressed in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* and the *Church Dogmatics*. After Barth's reading of Hepppe and Schmid he transitions from the dialectic language of veiling and unveiling that he uses in *Romans* to express the revelation of God in Jesus Christ to the concepts anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, which now serve as his ontological grounding to express the revelation of God in Christ.

This dissertation thirdly intends to examine the historical development of the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in Karl Barth's Christology, and the ontological function of these concepts in his development of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the 'Word became flesh.' We will follow Barth's formative theological grounding of the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ to his fuller development of Christ's human nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in its union with the Logos of God.

It is fourthly the intent of this dissertation to identify the themes of coalescence that Barth develops in the union of the divine Logos and the human nature, which is ontologically grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. For Barth, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is the act of God's reconciliation with humanity.

Fifthly this dissertation intends to examine Karl Barth's understanding of the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ as he interprets it through the lenses of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. While Barth does not disagree with the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures of Christ, he desires to more precisely define the union of divine and human natures in Christ as the act of God's revelation of the Son of Man *in His exaltation*.

It is Barth's ardent and enduring expression of Jesus Christ as God's revelation in this world<sup>3</sup> that marked his move away from the anthropocentric influences of his early theological training to a Christ-centered understanding of the revelation of God. It is, however, interesting to note that Barth's change in theological direction come about not during his research as a university

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<sup>3</sup> Given that the humanity of Christ is the true revelation of God, Trevor Hart singles out Karl Barth as the systematic theologian whose writings most seriously take up the themes of Christology and the knowledge of God in the twentieth century. That is, Barth tackles head on the themes of Christology together with the humanity of Christ as the mediator of reconciliation, in whose person manifests the true knowledge of God (cf. Trevor Hart, 'Was God in Christ?' in *Regarding Karl Barth*, p. 3).

professor of theology, but as a pastor in a small village in Safenwil, Switzerland. For Barth, the theological reality of a people who lived in a real world, beset with real problems, had no small impact on his thinking as he sought out a new theological course, the impetus of which was found in the Word of God.<sup>4</sup> That is, he began to be:

...increasingly preoccupied with the idea of the kingdom of God in the biblical, real, this-worldly sense of the term. This raised more and more problems over the way in which I should use the Bible in my sermons, which for all too long I had taken for granted.<sup>5</sup>

With Barth's turn to the Scriptures came his serious attention to its exegesis, which found significant expression in *The Epistle to the Romans*. In Barth's *Romans* we do not simply find a turning away from liberal theology, but Barth's absolute turning to the Scriptures as the 'witness to the Word of God' made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup> This marks Barth's theological grounding – that true knowledge of God first demands the revelation of God – which can only be made manifest in God's movement towards humankind; the act of God in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup> This is God making a great promise to Mary that she would have a son, and that:

"You shall call his name Jesus!" This is something which theologically as well as practically cannot be elucidated enough, that indeed the whole content of the Bible from A to Z including everything we call the Christian Church and Christian dispensation absolutely depends on this name Jesus. The *name* is the last thing that could still be said about someone, and everything now centers around this someone himself. Through this "someone," through Jesus, the Holy Scriptures is distinguished from other good and serious and pious books. Through Jesus that which in the Holy Scripture is called

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<sup>4</sup> The events of World War I also played a significant role in this change in Barth's thinking. Rothney Tshaka describes this as an external trigger – 'a war that was underpinned by a Christian nationalism and faith in ones nation-state.' The vacuous motivation of this movement helped point Barth back to the Scriptures as the true basis of Christian faith (cf. Rothney S. Tshaka. *Confessional Theology? A critical analysis of the theology of Karl Barth and its significance for the Belhar Confession*. D.Th. dissertation. (Stellenbosch University 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, in Barth's autobiographical sketch, *Fakultätsalbum der Evangelisch-theologischen Fakultät Münster*, 1927.

<sup>6</sup> Barth announced to the theological world his dramatic shift in thinking with his commentary on *The Epistle to the Romans*, which was first published in 1919, and published in its revised version (*Romans II*) in 1921. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Barth's first major 'theological' work is an exegesis of the Scriptures.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Mangina identifies another important component of Barth's break with liberal theology with respect to his rejection of 'Cartesianism', or an anthropological philosophy that depicts any human capacity for self transcendence. Barth attacks liberal theology from above in the realization that the God of the Bible cannot be defined in terms of the world (cf. Joseph L. Mangina, *Karl Barth on the Christian Life – The Practical Knowledge of God*, pp. 12 – 13).

revelation, is distinguished from what surely can also be said about the other great ones, gods and men.<sup>8</sup>

With Barth's theological bearings now firmly established in the Scripture (which attests to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ rather than being understood as revelation itself),<sup>9</sup> the reality of Barth's theology finds its basis in the reality of Jesus Christ. While philosophy may have a place in drawing attention to the great dichotomy between God and humanity, philosophy in itself has no power to stake a claim in the revelation of God.<sup>10</sup> For Barth, humanity is absolutely dependent upon God's willingness to move towards us and reveal Himself to us in a way that we can fully embrace; that is, in the revelation of the man Jesus of Nazareth.

For this reason theology can think and speak only as it looks at Jesus Christ and from the vantage point of what He is. It cannot introduce Him. Neither can it bring about that dialogue, history, and communion. It does not have the disposition of these things. It is dependent upon the Holy Scripture, according to which the covenant is *in full effect* and in which Jesus Christ *witnesses to Himself*. It hears this witness. It trusts it and is satisfied with it.<sup>11</sup>

In Barth's commentary on *Romans* the revelation of God in Jesus Christ clearly emerges with the force of God's movement toward humanity. This is the faithfulness of God revealed in Jesus Christ, who as the truth of eternity encounters this world as the light of redemption and forgiveness and resurrection.

In Him we have found the standard by which all discovery of God and all being discovered by Him is made known as such; in Him we recognize that this finding and being found is the truth of the order of eternity. Many live their lives in the light of redemption and forgiveness and resurrection; but that we have eyes to see their manner of life we owe to the One. In His light we see light. That it is the Christ whom we have

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Great Promise – Luke 1*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>9</sup> A. M. Fairweather understands that Barth's view of the Scriptures as revelation denudes it from that Word which is indeed God's Word. Fairweather posits that perhaps Barth's thinking requires a living reception of revelation to be taken in one way rather than another. Moreover, Fairweather argues that Barth's view of Scripture only bears witness to the possible operation of the Spirit where unity of God and with His Word is achieved, such that this unity as a secondary and instrumental factor has nothing to do with its content (cf. A. M. Fairweather, *The Word as Truth – A Critical Examination of the Christian Doctrine of Revelation in the Writings of Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth*, pp. 42-43). Barth's dynamic of the Scriptures simply attesting to the reality of revelation in Jesus Christ can be somewhat perplexing. Nevertheless, his theological development is consistently anchored in the Scriptures.

<sup>10</sup> Amy Marga notes that for Barth 'revelation means reconciliation'. In Barth's response to Erich Przywara and what he learned about catholic theology in his study of Thomas Aquinas, Barth begins his response using the philosophical category of realism claiming that without it the doctrine of revelation would not be possible. That is, 'without the philosophical perspective of realism, theology would not be able to affirm God's existence. As such, if theology claims that God is real, that 'God is', then it must speak to God's participation in creaturely 'being' (cf. Amy Marga, *Karl Barth's Dialogue with Catholicism in Göttingen and Münster*, pp. 136-137).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Humanity of God*, p. 55.

encountered in Jesus is guaranteed by our finding in Him the sharply defined, final interpretation of the Word of the faithfulness of God to which the Law and the Prophets bare witness. His entering within the deepest darkness of human ambiguity and abiding within it is THE faithfulness. The life of Jesus is perfected obedience to the will of the faithful God.<sup>12</sup>

In *Romans*, however, Barth expresses the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ as a dialectic in the veiling and unveiling of God in the flesh of Jesus the Nazarene. Barth uses the language of paradox to describe the revelation of God in the true humanity of Jesus, the same essence of humanity that is enjoined to all human beings. And yet, this true humanity does not exist in isolation, but is in fact joined to God Himself in its union with the eternal Logos. This is the ontological paradox that Barth expresses as the dialectic of veiling and unveiling of Christ's human nature. This is the language of Barth's *Romans* that anticipates the language of anhypostasis and enhypostasis, which he would soon discover, and which would provide the ontological frame of reference to more precisely express the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ as *vere Deus and vere homo*.

As Barth's theological course began to change in earnest (and quite literally in his move from the pastorate in Safenwil to Honorary Professor of Reformed Dogmatics in Göttingen), he made a significant discovery while reading Heinrich Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics*, together with Heinrich Schmid's *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, when he came across the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the humanity of Christ in union with the divine Logos.<sup>13</sup>

The concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis first emerged in the writings of the patristic orthodox<sup>14</sup> Church Fathers who defended the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures of Christ against attacks from the Eutychians on one side, who claimed that Chalcedon separated Jesus Christ into two persons; and the Nestorians on the other side, who claimed that Chalcedon merged the two natures of Christ into one. In response, Chalcedonian apologists developed

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, p. 97.

<sup>13</sup> Bruce McCormack notes that in May 1924 while preparing for his first lectures in dogmatics in Göttingen, Barth came upon the anhypostatic-enhypostatic Christological dogma of the ancient Church in Heinrich Heppe's post-Reformation textbook entitled *Reformed Dogmatics*, which became Barth's foundational text (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 327, 337).

<sup>14</sup> In this dissertation the term orthodox refers to agreement with the Council of Chalcedon's definition of Jesus Christ who exists as one Person with two natures, which are unconfused and indivisible; that is, very God and very man.



language that distinguished between the concepts of person (*hypostasis*) and nature (*physis*) in explaining how the human nature of Christ exists in union in the person of the Logos.

As such, they used the language of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain how the person of Jesus Christ, who is made manifest as the Logos in the flesh of humanity, can subsist as one distinct person who encompasses in His being two natures, divine and human, which are ‘unconfused, immutable, and indivisible, inseparable’ in their union.

Barth’s discovery of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is significant to his Christology for a number of reasons. First it allows him to transition from the motif of veiling and unveiling used in the paradoxical language of *Romans* to a more ontologically dynamic and precise language; language that for Barth is theologically and historically validated as orthodox to express the union of divine and human natures in Christ. Second, Barth can now use ontological language to more forcefully express how the ‘Word became flesh’ in the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is, anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis ground the humanity of Christ in His existence as the Logos of God, in the Word *becoming* flesh. Third, it opens up for Barth a fluid range of theological motion to express the revelation of God in the humanity of Christ as the coalescence of divine and human natures, which remain immutable and unconfused in this union. Fourth, anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis provide the ontological impetus for Barth to express the act of God’s revelation in the union of divinity with humanity made manifest in Jesus of Nazareth as the exaltation of the Son of Man.

Bruce McCormack identifies Barth’s discovery of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a momentous event in his Christology.<sup>15</sup> Barth now has at his disposal the ontological language necessary to more precisely express the revelation of God in the ontological event of Jesus Christ. McCormack’s observation, however, began a theological debate of sorts over Barth’s adoption of these concepts into his Christology and whether or not Barth had misinterpreted anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as first received and developed by the patristic Fathers, and subsequently adopted by the scholastics.

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<sup>15</sup> McCormack argues that Barth saw in it ‘an understanding of the incarnate being of the Mediator which preserved that infinite qualitative distinction between God and humankind which had been at the forefront of his concerns throughout the previous phase’. The similarity to the dialectic of veiling and unveiling that Barth expressed in *Romans* was obvious. In taking human nature to Himself in the flesh of Jesus, God veils Himself in this creaturely form. While Jesus is a human being like any other, He was at every point the Second Person of the Trinity (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 327).



F. LeRon Shults wrote an essay entitled ‘A Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth’, where he argues that Barth misinterprets anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis contrary to the patristic Church Fathers as he received it through the dogmatic compilations of Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe. Following Shults, U.M. Lang<sup>16</sup> and Matthias Gockel<sup>17</sup> wrote articles arguing that the protestant scholasticism that Barth worked through to develop his own understanding of this teaching was very much in line with the traditional understanding of this teaching. Gockel, however, states that Barth’s adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula is an innovation all his own.<sup>18</sup>

With respect to Shults I argue that Barth’s interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual ontological formula to express the human nature of Christ differs not only with the patristic Church Fathers, but with the scholastics and post-scholastics as well; all of which interpreted anhypostasis and enhypostasis as autonomous concepts to describe the human nature of Christ. Moreover, while I agree with Gockel that Barth’s adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula is an innovation all his own, I push this argument forward by demonstrating that Barth’s ontological innovation proves to be foundational to his Christology as a whole.

In his book *The Humanity of Christ* Paul Dafydd Jones argues that while Barth’s adoption of anhypostasis and enhypostasis marked a defining moment in his early theological development, Barth departs from the ‘older dogmatics’ in favor of his own reflections in his mature Christology.<sup>19</sup>

I argue that Barth’s unique adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual ontological formula demonstrates quite clearly that Barth makes this doctrine his own to express the humanity of Christ as the revelation of God. I further argue that Barth’s adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis does not mark a change in his theological thinking per se, but rather provides the ontological language for Barth to express more precisely the event of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ that carries through to his mature theology.

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<sup>16</sup> U. M. Lang published an article entitled ‘Anhypostasis-Enhypostasis: Church Fathers, Protestant Orthodoxy and Karl Barth’ *The Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1998): 630 – 57.

<sup>17</sup> Matthias Gockel published an article entitled ‘A Dubious Christological Formula? Leontius of Byzantium and the Anhypostasis – Enhypostasis Theory’ *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 51(2) (2000), 515-532.

<sup>18</sup> Graham Ward notes the development of this debate and the ‘dialectical character’ of Barth’s adoption of anhypostasis and enhypostasis as a dual formula (cf. Graham Ward, *Christ and Culture*, p. 10).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Paul Dafydd Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, p. 147.

The revelation of the Triune God in Jesus of Nazareth is the very essence of Barth's theology. With his adoption of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis formula Barth can now express in ontological terms – beginning in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* and continuing throughout the *Church Dogmatics* – the indissoluble union of the human nature of Christ with the Logos as the mediator of reconciliation as the revelation of God.

But from the utter uniqueness of this unity follows the statement, that God and man are so related in Jesus Christ, that He exists as man so far and only so far as He exists as God, i.e., in the mode of existence of the eternal Word of God. What we therefore express as a doctrine unanimously sponsored by early theology in its entirety, that of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis of the human nature of Christ.<sup>20</sup>

It is therefore not possible in Barth's thinking to set aside the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature because it establishes ontologically the indissoluble union of the Logos with Christ's human nature necessary to accomplish the reconciliation of God with humanity. Barth insists that the enhypostasis of Christ's human nature must be understood in relation to the anhypostasis of the same human nature. Citing his understanding of the scholastics, Barth states that:

Their negative position asserted that Christ's flesh in itself has no existence, and this was asserted in the interests of their positive position that Christ's flesh has its existence through the Word and in the Word, who is God Himself acting as Revealer and Reconciler. Understood in this its original sense, this particular doctrine, abstruse in appearance only, is particularly well adapted to make it clear that the reality attested by the Holy Scriptures, Jesus Christ, is the reality of a divine act of Lordship, which is unique and singular as compared with all other events, and in this way to characterize it as a reality held up to faith by revelation. It is in virtue of the eternal Word that Jesus Christ exists as a man of flesh and blood in our sphere, as a man like us, as an historical phenomenon.<sup>21</sup>

Barth's coupling together of these opposite perspectives therefore creates in his Christology a unique and dynamic understanding of the humanity of Christ. God and humanity are united in such a way that to say Jesus of Nazareth is to say very God, and to say the Logos of God is to say very man. For Barth, while they are separate in their essence, they are never distinct in this union of God and humanity. They are indeed one.

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, p. 163.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, p. 164.

This embodies the person of Jesus Christ as very God and very man, and in fact establishes the unifying cord that binds together the ontological essence of the God-man with His role as the mediator of reconciliation. This is the ontological event of the God-man (so to speak) as Barth expresses the coalescence of the absolute union of very God and very man in Jesus Christ. In this way, as the keeper of the covenant, Jesus Christ is therefore both the subject and object of divine election.

Everything which comes from God takes place “in Jesus Christ,” i.e., in the establishment of the covenant which, in the union of His Son with Jesus of Nazareth, God has instituted and maintains and directs between Himself and His people, the people consisting of those who belong to Him, who have become His in this One. The primal history which underlies and is the goal of the whole history of His relationship *ad extra*, with the creation and man in general, is the history of this covenant.<sup>22</sup>

This self-revelation of God converges in the election of Jesus Christ who is both the electing God and elected humanity.

It is the name of Jesus Christ which, according to the divine self-revelation, forms the focus at which the two decisive beams of the truth forced upon us converge and unite: on the one hand the electing God and on the other the elected man.<sup>23</sup>

As the mediator of the covenant between God and humanity Jesus Christ invades time and space, and humbles Himself as the Son of Man. And yet, even in His humiliation as Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus Christ is exalted as the Son of Man. For Barth, there can be no distinction in time between Jesus Christ’s humiliation and exaltation. To do so would split apart the divine nature from the human nature in their absolute union. In other words, this is not an ontological possibility based upon Barth’s understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature in its union with the Logos. Scripturally speaking Barth argues:

Where in Paul, for example, is He the Crucified who has not yet risen, or the Risen who has not yet been crucified? Would He be the One whom the New Testament attests as the Mediator between God and man if He were only the one and not the other? And if He is the Mediator, which one of the two can He be alone and without the other? Both aspects force themselves upon us. We have to do with the being of the one and entire Jesus Christ

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. *CD* II/2, pp. 8-9.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *CD* II/2, p. 59.

whose humiliation adds nothing. And in this being we have to do with His action, the work and event of the atonement.<sup>24</sup>

In the revelation of Jesus Christ He takes to Himself genuine humanity and exalts it in indissoluble union with the Logos. This is the action, the movement of grace in God's self-revelation in Jesus of Nazareth as genuine humanity.

The reconciliation of the world with God takes place in the person of a man in whom, because He is also true God, the conversion of all men to God is an actual event. It is the person of a true man, like all other men in every respect, subjected without exception to all the limitations of the human situation. The conditions in which other men exist and their suffering are also His conditions and His suffering. That He is very God does not mean that He is partly God and only partly man. He is altogether man just as He is altogether God—altogether man in virtue of His true Godhead whose glory consists in His humiliation.<sup>25</sup>

The reality of Christ's humanity is the light that the humanity of the first Adam can only reflect. Jesus of Nazareth is in fact the first Adam, where life in Christ helps to explain life in Adam. Fundamentally Barth argues that real and genuine humanity is the humanity of Christ. The human nature that we share with Adam is preserved as a 'provisional copy' of the real humanity that is in Christ. As Adam's heirs, as sinners and enemies of God, we are still in this provisional way humanity whose nature reflects the true human nature of Christ.

Paul does not go to Adam to see how he is connected with Christ; he goes to Christ to see how *He* is connected with Adam.<sup>26</sup>

The absolute union of *very God* and *very man* in the person of Jesus Christ mirrors the absolute union of the *person* and *work* of Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation. Barth does not distinguish between the event of Jesus Christ as the revelation of God, and the event of Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation. He exists as the Mediator of reconciliation between God and humanity in the sense that in Him the reconciliation of God and humanity are event, and in this event:

God encounters and is revealed to all men as the gracious God and in this event again all men are placed under the consequence and outworking of this encounter and revelation.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 133.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 130.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 60.

The eternal Word invades time and space and claims it as His own. In the Word of God becoming flesh in time, in every moment of His temporal existence, and every point before or after His temporal existence in which He manifested Himself as true God and true man – *Jesus Christ is the same*.

To understand Barth's vantage point here in view of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is to start with the eternal Logos, but the Logos that is not isolated from the humanity that He is elected to assume.

For Jesus Christ—not an empty *Logos*, but Jesus Christ the incarnate Word, the baby born in Bethlehem, the man put to death at Golgotha and raised again in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, the man whose history this is—is the unity of the two. He is both at one and the same time.<sup>28</sup>

Karl Barth's expression of the humanity of Christ as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis reaches its apex in the Doctrine of Reconciliation where he develops Jesus Christ as the *Servant as Lord*. It is in the *Homecoming of the Son of Man* – in Christ's exaltation as the true Man – where Barth emphasizes the human nature of Christ being brought into union with the divine nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in dialogue with the Chalcedon definition of the two natures.

For Barth, the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature undergird his insistence that the person of Jesus Christ must not be viewed statically in His being as the God-man, but dynamically in the event of God's movement of grace towards humanity.

Moreover, for Barth, the exaltation of human essence in the Son of Man is expressed in the language of *communicatio idiomatum* (the *impartation* of the human essence to the divine and the divine to the human, as it takes place in Jesus Christ), which Barth understands to be more deeply expressed in the *communio naturarum* (the *communion* of the human and divine essence in the one Jesus Christ without change and admixture, but also without cleavage and separation). But more deeply still, the exaltation of the Son of Man is expressed in the *unio hypostatica*, where the union of the divine and human essence in Christ *constitutes one personal life*, and yet they remain distinct. This is the movement of God's grace towards humanity (the *communicatio*

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 125.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 53.

*gratiarum*) in His willing condescension in the union of divine essence with human essence in the person of Jesus Christ. As Barth aptly expresses:

In all this we are again describing the enhypostasis or anhypostasis of the human nature of Jesus Christ. We may well say that this is the sum and root of all grace addressed to Him. Whatever else has still to be said may be traced back to the fact, and depends upon it, that the One who is Jesus Christ is present in human nature is the Son of God, that the Son is present as this man is present, and that this man is none other than the Son. We can and should state this as follows. It is only as the Son of God that Jesus Christ also exists as man, but He does actually exist in this way. As a man, of this human essence, He can be known even by those who do not know Him as the Son of God.<sup>29</sup>

Methodologically, this dissertation first reviews the historical development of the concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis used by patristic Church Fathers, scholastics, and post-scholastic writers to defend the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ against Monophysite and Nestorian attacks. Second, this dissertation is a theological study of Karl Barth's interpretation and appropriation of the concepts anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis into his Christological method as the ontological grounding for his Christology.

In order to clarify how Karl Barth interprets the historical development of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature, and to demonstrate the significance of Barth's appropriation of these terms into his Christology, this dissertation is developed in five separate but interrelated chapters. An examination of the historical orthodox development of anhypostasis and enhypostasis as separate and unrelated terms is presented to establish the interpretive dichotomy with respect to Karl Barth's own interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as congruent and interrelated terms. It is Barth's own unique appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to express the humanity of Christ that not only provides the significant ontological grounding for his expression of Christ's human nature, but also becomes the binding ontological chord in Barth's unique expression(s) of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ. Moreover, Barth critiques Chalcedon's definition of the two natures of Christ through his understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. Although Barth does not disagree with Chalcedon's definition of the two natures of Christ, he uses the dynamic of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to more precisely define the union of divine

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 91.

and human natures as the *hypostatica unio* in the act of God's revelation made manifest in the exaltation of the Son of Man.

**Chapter Two** follows the historical orthodox development of the concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the humanity of Christ. Four patristic writers are first reviewed: John of Caesarea, Leontius of Byzantium, Leontius of Jerusalem, and John of Damascus, all of whom used the concept of enhypostasis to explain that the human nature of Christ exists as a real subsistence in the hypostasis of the Logos. The concept of anhypostasis, however, is a contra description to explain that Christ's human nature has no reality in itself outside of its union with the Logos. Lutheran and Reformed scholastic writers, as well as the eighteenth century dogmatic compilations of Heinrich Schmid (Lutheran) and Heinrich Heppe (Reformed) are reviewed, which demonstrates a consistency not only in their understanding of the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ, but also an understanding consistent with the patristic fathers. Historical orthodox writers understood anhypostasis and enhypostasis to be autonomous concepts. Therefore, a dual formulation of these terms was foreign to their thinking. Karl Barth's dual formulation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ differs from historical orthodoxy, and is unique to his Christology.

**Chapter Three** examines Karl Barth's unique interpretation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to express the human nature of Christ. The dialectical language of veiling and unveiling used by Barth in *The Epistle to the Romans* to express the revelation of God in Christ's human nature anticipates the language of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

Barth is introduced to the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis through the dogmatics compilations of Heinrich Schmid (Lutheran) and Heinrich Heppe (Reformed). These terms first find expression in Barth's writing in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, and are more fully developed over the course of his work in the *Church Dogmatics*. Our main concern here is to understand how Barth interprets these concepts as a dual formula to express the existence of the human nature of Christ in union with the divine Logos, and how his interpretation differs from that of historical protestant orthodoxy.

**Chapter Four** follows the historical development of the concepts anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in Karl Barth's Christology as his ontological grounding for expressing the revelation of God in

Jesus Christ as the ‘Word became flesh’. This is important to understand because while the language of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis did not first appear until the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, Barth’s theology of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ was firmly grounded after his break with liberal theology and his turn to the Scripture as his basis for theology. Barth’s discovery of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis simply gave ontological expression to his already established conviction that Jesus of Nazareth is indissolubly united to the Logos as the God-man.

Anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis provide the theological function for Barth’s development of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the ‘Word became flesh’ in the Ἐγένετο. Interestingly, Barth also employs the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dialectical argument in his dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology in working through the ontological character of the union of very God with very man.

**Chapter Five** identifies the themes of coalescence in the divine and human natures of Christ grounded in the ontology of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature. Barth develops Jesus Christ, who as the revelation of God realizes in His being the convergence of eternity and time as the mediator of reconciliation, given the ontological backdrop of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

**Chapter Six** evaluates Barth’s critique of Chalcedon’s definition of the two natures of Christ as very God and very man through the ontological lenses of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature. While Barth does not disagree with the Chalcedon definition in essentials, he is interested to develop a more precise definition and understanding of the union of divine and human natures in Christ as the act of God’s revelation as the Son of Man in His exaltation.



## Chapter Two – Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis: Historical Formulation and Interpretation

### 2.1 Introduction

In his *Church Dogmatics*<sup>30</sup> Karl Barth relentlessly develops and interprets the person of Jesus Christ as the necessary *subject* and *object* of divine revelation whose fingerprints touch upon every nuance of Sacred Scripture.<sup>31</sup> For Barth, Jesus Christ is the central figure and focus of the Word of God manifested in time and space as the ‘Word became flesh.’<sup>32</sup> Barth explains that:

This fulfilled time which is identical with Jesus Christ, this absolute event in relation to which every event is not yet event or has ceased to be so, this “It is finished,” this *Deus dixit* for which there are no analogies, is the revelation attested to in the Bible. To understand the Bible from beginning to end, from verse to verse, is to understand how everything in it relates to this as its invisible-visible centre.<sup>33</sup>

Grounded in the reality of the ‘Word became flesh’ Barth expresses Jesus Christ as the absolute center of God’s revelation of Himself whose advent marks the fullness of God’s free grace bestowed upon humanity,<sup>34</sup> and in whose person manifests the confluence of ‘very God and very man’.<sup>35</sup> That being said, any honest investigation into Karl Barth’s ontological and theological development of Jesus Christ as the God-man must recognize Barth’s insistence that the human nature of Christ exists in absolute union with His divine nature. One in fact can argue that Barth understands the ontological essence of Jesus Christ as he understands the ontological essence of the triune God; that is, just as the Son exists in perfect union with the Father and the Holy Spirit as one God, so too the divine nature of Christ exists in perfect union with His human nature as

<sup>30</sup> Throughout his *Church Dogmatics* Barth works within a wide scope of historical / theological church doctrine that finds its nucleus in the person of Jesus Christ. Barth integrates Christology throughout his *Church Dogmatics*, which flows out of his development of (1) the *Doctrine of the Word of God*, (2) the *Doctrine of God*, (3) the *Doctrine of Creation*, and (4) the *Doctrine of Reconciliation*, all of which find their impetus in the revelation of Jesus Christ as *very God* and *very man* (cf. Barth, *CD I/2*. p.147). That being said, we do not understand Barth’s integration of Christology throughout the *Church Dogmatics* to be done so as to isolate Christ (second person of the Trinity) from His relationship within the Triune Godhead, because in Christ is made manifest the revelation of the Triune God.

<sup>31</sup> Barth understands the person of Jesus Christ to manifest the full revelation of the Word of God in this world (cf. Barth, *CD I/2*. p.147).

<sup>32</sup> For Barth, the historical event realized in ‘the Word became flesh’ points to the center, to the unveiling mystery of the revelation of God being among us and with us in the person of Jesus Christ (cf. Barth, *CD I/2*. p.159).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *CD I/1*, p.116.

<sup>34</sup> In this dissertation, men and women will be referred to jointly as humanity, humankind, etc. We will, however, remain true to the language as received when quoting Karl Barth and his use of ‘man’ or ‘men’ to refer to men and women jointly.

<sup>35</sup> Barth understands Jesus Christ to be *very God* and *very man* who as the eternal Son of God Son (the Logos) assumed a nature like ours, the same nature subject to sin (yet without sin) in which we stand before God as condemned and lost sinners (cf. Barth, *CD I/2*. p.153).

one person.<sup>36</sup> In this way both ontological formulations of (1) the Triune God and (2) Jesus Christ manifest perfect union together with perfect distinctiveness in their being.<sup>37</sup>

Given this ontological presupposition Barth works out his understanding of the fundamental / biblical truth undergirding the essence of Jesus Christ, which he encapsulates in the statement the ‘Word became flesh.’<sup>38</sup> In this event, eternal God in the second person of the Trinity reveals in this world *true* God by taking upon Himself the nature of *true* humanity. And in this event, in the eternal Word taking upon Himself the nature of created humanity, Barth could in no way conceive ontologically of the person of Jesus Christ in whose being separates in any sense true God from true humanity.<sup>39</sup> Whatever argument one makes with respect to Barth’s understanding of Jesus Christ as the God-man, that argument must grant that Barth worked within a Christological system that understands Jesus Christ as one person who perfectly unites in His being the natures of *true* God and *true* humanity – *given his understanding of Christ’s human nature as true humanity*.

Throughout his *Church Dogmatics* and investigation into the person of Jesus Christ, Barth moves deliberately (one may even say cautiously) as he considers the objectives of *Church Dogmatics* as an investigational study within the context of Biblical exegesis, historical church councils, and the works of theologians whose influence lay heavy upon orthodox Christology.<sup>40</sup> In view of Barth’s approach to dogmatics, one of the critical questions we raise with respect to Barth’s understanding of the human nature of Christ is how he interprets the historical / theological development of Christ’s human nature as evidenced by his adoption of the dual formula *anhypostasis and enhypostasis*.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Barth stresses that the human existence of Jesus is possible only through His union with the eternal Word, a union which is accomplished in every respect as *very God* and *very man* (cf. Barth, *CD I/2*. p. 136). The emphasis here is placed on the inseparable unity of the divine essence with humanity while maintaining the distinctiveness between divinity and humanity.

<sup>37</sup> Barth uses the term ‘mode’ (not to be understood as modalism) to describe the distinctions between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as his way to emphasize the perfect union within the Godhead relative to His being and work (cf. Barth, *CD I/1*. p. 362).

<sup>38</sup> Barth’s development of ‘The Word became flesh’ becomes the major theme for explaining the act of God’s self revelation in the person of Jesus Christ (cf. Barth *CD I/2*. p. 159).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Barth, *CD I/2*. p. 161.

<sup>40</sup> Barth gives significant consideration to patristic and scholastic scholars, as well as historical church council proclamations in developing his interpretation and understanding of the ontology of Christ.

<sup>41</sup> Barth’s own interpretation of the historical / theological development of the terms *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* prove to be a major point of investigation into his appropriation of these terms as a ‘dual’ formula in his Christology.

For Barth, anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis was historically validated as a legitimate theological expression of how the person of Christ embodies both divine and human natures ontologically. This is not an insignificant point of theological reference because it enabled Barth to cite this formula as both historical and authoritative support for his own ontological development of the God-man. That is, Barth cites the use of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis by earlier dogmaticians to explain how the human nature of Christ comes into union with the divine nature of the Logos. Barth surmises that:

The earlier dogmaticians tried even more explicitly to distinguish from every other kind of unity, and in that way to characterize, the uniqueness of the unity of the Word and human nature...But from the utter uniqueness of this unity follows the statement that God and Man are so related in Jesus Christ, that He exists as Man so far and only so far as He exists as God, i.e. in the mode of existence of the eternal Word of God. What we therefore express as a doctrine unanimously sponsored by early theology in its entirety, that of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis of the human nature of Christ. Anhypostasis asserts the negative...Apart from the divine mode of being whose existence it acquires it has none of its own; Enhypostasis asserts the positive. In virtue of the ἐγένετο, i.e., in virtue of the *assumptio*, the human nature acquires existence (subsistence) in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (hypostasis, “person”) of the word.<sup>42</sup>

The genesis of Barth’s appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is found in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*<sup>43</sup> where he provides an early glimpse into his understanding of the term *anhypostatos*, which he uses negatively to express the human nature of Christ having no reality in itself, and the *enhypostatos*, which he uses positively to express the human nature of Christ as having real subsistence in its union with the divine Logos. We note also in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* that Barth primarily treats anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as two independent terms in describing the human nature of Christ in its ontological union with God the Son.

Nevertheless – and this is where the emphasis falls – this individual that incorporates human nature has never existed anywhere as such. The humanity of Christ, although it is body and soul, and an individual, is nothing subsistent or real in itself. Thus it did not exist prior to its union with the Logos. It has no independent existence alongside or apart from him...This idea, the idea of humanity, and this individual who incorporates it, cannot for a single moment be abstracted from their assumption into the person of the Logos. The divine subject who unites Himself with them makes them revelation. The

<sup>42</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 163.

<sup>43</sup> Barth’s dogmatics work first began with his lectures at Göttingen where he became the Honorary Professor of Reformed Theology in 1921 (cf. *Göttingen Dogmatics*, Preface IX).

human nature of Christ has no personhood of its own. It is anhypostatos – the formula in which the description culminates. Or, more positively, it is enhypostatos. It has personhood, subsistence, reality, only in its union with the Logos of God.<sup>44</sup>

In the *Church Dogmatics*, however, Barth clearly transitions from the incongruity of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, to an understanding of the interrelationship between the terms as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, which are now developed as a congruent / dual formula to express ontologically how the human nature of Christ exists in union with the divine Logos. Furthermore, we see in the *Church Dogmatics* Barth's mature development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as ontological terms,<sup>45</sup> together with the significance of his appropriation of these terms in his Christology.

Given therefore the significance of Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in his Christological method, we will investigate the historical / theological development and interpretation of these terms used to express the human nature of Christ considering three historical periods:

1. Orthodox Patristic Greek writers during the 6<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup> centuries
2. Lutheran and Reformed Scholastic writers during the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries
3. Lutheran and Reformed dogmatics compilations of Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe (respectively) written during the nineteenth century (post-scholastic period)

We will investigate how the terms anhypostatos and enhypostatos (together with other formulations of these terms) were used by orthodox writers throughout these periods of Christological development to express ontologically the human nature of Christ.

This analysis will also serve as a frame of historical reference for understanding the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis, and their use by orthodox theologians juxtaposed against Barth's own understanding and appropriation in his Christology. This will in turn provide a theological

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Barth, *Göttingen Dogmatics*, p. 157.

<sup>45</sup> The breadth of Karl Barth's usage of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis extends from the *Doctrine of the Word of God* (CD I/2) published in 1939, to the *Doctrine of Creation* (CD III/2) published in 1945, to the *Doctrine of Reconciliation* (CD IV/2) published in 1955.

gage to measure Barth's understanding of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis compared to the orthodox tradition.

## 2.2 Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis: Patristic Period Formulation

### 2.2.1 Prelude

The Council of Chalcedon's ontological formulation of Jesus Christ as: 'one hypostasis with two natures', coupled with theological opposition raised against it became the impetus for orthodox patristic writers to explain and defend Christ's human nature consistent with the Chalcedonian definition.<sup>46</sup> The Council's language expressing the person of Jesus Christ as 'very God and very man' is concise and decisive:

Following the holy Fathers we teach with one voice that the Son [of God] and our Lord Jesus Christ is to be confessed as one and the same [Person], that he is perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, very God and very man, of a reasonable soul and [human] body consisting, consubstantial with the Father as touching his Godhead, and consubstantial with us as touching his manhood; made in all things like unto us, sin only excepted; begotten of his Father before the worlds according to his Godhead; but in these last days for us men and for our salvation born [into the world] of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God according to his manhood. This one and the same Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son [of God] must be confessed to be in two natures, unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably [united], and that without the distinction of natures being taken away by each union, but rather the peculiar property of each nature being preserved and being united in one Person and subsistence, not separated or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten, God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old time have spoken concerning him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us, and as the Creed of the Fathers hath delivered to us.<sup>47</sup>

The Chalcedonian definition set out to establish a true incarnation of the Logos, which denied the conversion of God into humanity, nor the conversion of humanity into God, with the consequent absorption of the one into the other. But rather, it is the actual and abiding union of the two in

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<sup>46</sup> In view of the Chalcedonian language describing Jesus Christ as one hypostasis with two natures, both the Alexandrians and Antiochenes were concerned with finding language that adequately describes the center of Christ's will and action. The two sides, however, disagreed over the identity of the primary agent in Christ. Cyril's focus centered on the Logos in Christ whereas Nestorius focused on the man assumed in Christ. The Antiochenes preferred to describe the stability and unity of Christ by using *prosopon* (person); that is, a legal person (*persona*). In contrast, Cyril of Alexandria preferred the language of *physis* (nature), which implied the unity of the acting and encountered Logos. When Cyril of Alexandria used his trademark phrase 'one incarnate nature (*mia physis*) of God the Logos', he could still distinguish the intact divine and human natures (*physeis*, plural) that are united in Christ (cf. Lisa Maugans Driver, *Christ at the Center – the Early Church Era*, p. 219). We note also that as the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity marks the half way point between Tritheism and Sabellianism, so the Chalcedonian formula marks the mid-way point between Nestorianism and Eutychianism (cf. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, Volume 1, p. 30).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Schaff and Wace (ed.), Vol.14. The Seven Ecumenical Councils, Second Series, p. 264-265.

one personal life of Christ. Nature or substance (*ousia*) represents the totality of powers and qualities that constitute a being. Person or hypostasis (*prosopon*) is the self-asserting and acting subject.<sup>48</sup> Chalcedon's formulation of the unity and distinctiveness of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ therefore becomes the impetus for further developing the distinction between hypostasis and physis:

From the formula of Chalcedon, 'Jesus Christ one hypostasis in two natures,' it may be seen that the Council was concerned with determining the levels of unity and distinctness in Christ. The differentiation between hypostasis and physis developed out of this problem.<sup>49</sup>

In spite of the almost unanimous declaration of the bishops in favor of the Council of Chalcedon's new formulations, as was true for all new councils that differed from previous tradition, reception was not an instant event. The formulation of 'one hypostasis in two natures' led to the formation of clearly delineated parties. Depending on the spiritual or psychological presuppositions of the parties, the result could be fruitful dialogue or irreconcilable opposition. Both it can be said are found in the aftermath of Chalcedon.<sup>50</sup>

Subsequent to Chalcedon the Monophysites voiced their opposition to the Council's formulation of Christ as 'one hypostasis with two natures',<sup>51</sup> and branded it as nothing more than a thinly veiled Nestorianism.<sup>52</sup> Ongoing Monophysite rejection of Chalcedon precipitated debate over the

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, p. 30.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, 'The Understanding of the Christological Definitions of Both (Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic) Traditions in the Light of the Post-Chalcedonian Theology (Analysis of Terminologies in a Conceptual Framework)' in *Christ in East and West*. Paul Fries and Tiran Nersoyan (ed.), p. 75. Kenneth Paul Wesche also points to Chalcedon's use of the terms hypostasis and nature (*physis*) to express Jesus Christ as the God-man, and notes that Chalcedon synthesized the language and thought of Pope Leo I and Cyril, and moored the terms physis and hypostasis to a fixed frame of reference: the Son of God is one hypostasis *in* two natures, and two natures *in* one hypostasis (cf. Kenneth Paul Wesche, 'The Christology of Leontius of Jerusalem Monophysite or Chalcedonian', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* (31) 1987, p. 66).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*. Volume 2. From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590 – 604), Part 4, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Rather than bringing unity to the Christological debate over the two natures of Christ, the Chalcedonian Creed revived the conflict between the Monophysites and the Nestorians. Many followers of the Alexandrian Christology believed that the Chalcedonian Creed did not sufficiently take into account their concern to emphasize more the unity of the two natures in the person of Christ (cf. Bernhard Lohse, *A Short History of Christian Doctrine – From the First Century to the Present*, p. 94).

<sup>52</sup> The Nestorians argued that the two natures of Christ presupposed two persons. Nestorius himself was chiefly concerned with the sharp division between the human and divine; that is, between the Creator and the created. This was an axiomatic principle that he defended at all costs, a distinction that Chalcedon made no attempt to resolve except simply to affirm two natures in one and one in two without separation or mixture. This in fact was the confession that Nestorius was trying to establish (cf. Frances M. Young, *From Nicea to Chalcedon*, p. 239).



ontological union of Christ's divine and human natures well into the eight century. Chalcedonian apologists who argued against the co-mixture of Christ's natures (as purported by the Monophysites) faced the challenge of balancing their argument against the conclusion that distinguishing between the divine and human natures logically issues two separate persons (as purported by the Nestorians).

In the Monophysite opposition to Chalcedon, Severus of Antioch<sup>53</sup> argued that 'there is no nature without prosopon', i.e. concrete individual ( 'οὐκ ἔστι φύσις ἀπρόσωπος'). This axiom was often used by miaphysites in their attacks on Chalcedonian Christology claiming that the doctrine of one prosopon or hypostasis in two natures is merely a disguised Nestorianism because it necessarily implies two prosopa.<sup>54</sup>

It was during this critical period of Christological development that the terms enypostaton<sup>55</sup> and anypostaton<sup>56</sup> found expression from the pens of Chalcedonian apologists in their defense of the human nature of Christ against Monophysite and Nestorian protagonists. It is in consideration of these arguments and the use of the terms anypostaton and enypostaton to define the human nature of Christ that we investigate the following questions:

1. Was there a consensus agreement among orthodox patristic writers in their use of the terms anypostatos and enypostatos to describe the human nature of Christ?
2. If there were any distinctions in the use of these terms, what were they, and what impact did they have in this area of Christology?
3. Did those who used the language of anypostatos and enypostatos depart in any significant way from the language and orthodox interpretation of Chalcedon?

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<sup>53</sup> Severus, also known as the Patriarch of Antioch (512-518), was a leading opponent of Chalcedon's formula defining the person of Christ as one hypostasis with two natures (cf. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Part II. Vol. II, 1995, p. 19). Severus claimed that his opponents said: 'it was in his ousia that the Logos of God endured the saving cross and took upon himself the passion on our behalf', and that they 'would not consent to call the one Lord and our God and Savior Jesus Christ homoousios with us in the flesh' (cf. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition. Volume I. The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition* (100-600). P. 269.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. U. M. Lang, 'Anhypostasis-enhypostasis: church fathers, Protestant orthodoxy and Karl Barth.' *The Journal of Theological Studies* 49, Pt, 2, October 1998, p. 636.

<sup>55</sup> The term enypostaton is the adjectival form of hypostasis, and is used to describe a being with subsistence in itself. Some scholars such as Aloys Grillmeier use the more traditional transliteration enhypostaton (with an "h"). Other forms of this terminology include enhypostatos and anhypostatos as noted in the text of this chapter.

<sup>56</sup> The term anypostaton is the adjectival form of hypostasis, and is used to describe a being without subsistence in itself.



Our analysis of the terms *anypostatos* and *enypostatos* used by Chalcedonian apologists to express the human nature of Christ in the patristic period will consider four theologians whose writings were influential and authoritative: (1) John of Caesarea, (2) Leontius of Byzantium, (3) Leontius of Jerusalem, and (4) John of Damascus.

### 2.2.2 John of Caesarea

John of Caesarea (early sixth century theologian also known as John the Grammarian) is recognized by scholars as an early and leading defender of the Chalcedonian formula, which defines Christ as one person with two natures. An opponent of Severus, John developed a more structured defense of the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures of Christ, citing Cyril as a supporter of his argument.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, in his defense of Chalcedon John is also recognized as the first theologian to give prominence to the term *enhypostatos* in Christology (cf. Lang 1998:632). In his work entitled *Apologia Concilii Chalcedonensis*<sup>58</sup> John responds to Severus' claim that there is no nature without *prosopon*, where Severus argues that Chalcedon's definition of Christ as 'one *prosopon* / *hypostasis* with two natures' is simply a disguised Nestorianism because it implies two *prosopa*. In his response to Severus John introduces the term *ἐνυπόστατος* to explain the human nature of Christ. Interestingly, John argues that Severus (who himself held that the union in Christ came out of two natures) would be forced to admit that this union came out of two *prosopa* following his own line of logic (cf. Lang 1998:636).<sup>59</sup>

John of Caesarea, however, does not develop his argument against Severus using the well known Cyrillian formula 'ἐν ὧσιν καθ' ὑπόστασιν' to express the human nature of Christ, but instead coins a new term *ἐνυπόστατος*, which he uses to describe a sense of 'existing' or being 'real' to explain the Christology of Chalcedon (cf. Lang 1998:636). That John uses *enypostatos* to

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Vol. 2. Part 2, pp. 24-25.

<sup>58</sup> In this analysis Lang cites John of Caesarea's work entitled *Apologia Concilii Chalcedonensis*. Excerpta Graeca: CCG I.

<sup>59</sup> Aloys Grillmeier notes also in John's argument against Severus a synthesis between the teaching of Chalcedon and Cyril (cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Part II. Vol. II., p. 25). D. M. Baillie notes with respect to the fifth century controversy with Nestorius, that Cyril of Alexandria 'worked out the idea, which passed into Catholic dogma, that there was no man Jesus existing independently of the Divine Logos: the human element in the Incarnation was simply human *nature* assumed by the second person of the Trinity. There was no human *hypostasis* or *persona*: the *persona* was the Divine Son, while the human nature was *ἐνυπόστατος*' (cf. D. M. Baillie, *God was in Christ*, pp. 85-86).

mean ‘existing’ or ‘real’ is evident in his interpretation of Athanasius’ exegesis of ὑπαρξίς in Jeremiah 9:9 (LXX). John explains:

Therefore if someone according to this comment speaks of the substances as *enhypostatoi*, that is existing, not even we would deny that. For the hypostasis is not different from the substance as for existence, but insofar as the one exists as common, namely the substance, the hypostasis, however, as proper, whenever together with that which is universal it is also in possession of that which is proper.<sup>60</sup>

John uses *physis* in relation to nature to explain the Chalcedonian formula of ‘one hypostasis with two natures’ via the concept of *ousia*. For Chalcedon and Severus alike, the controversy about concepts revolved around the word *physis* and its meaning. In his effort to ‘prove the legitimacy of the ‘two *physeis*’ of Chalcedon, John called in, not at all clumsily, the concept *ousia*. By precise definition he attempted to contrast it with the concept hypostasis and to give it its own function in establishing the two-nature formula.’<sup>61</sup>

John clarifies the term *ousia* to express the ‘real existence’ of Christ’s human nature and its relation to hypostasis, but he also is careful to show that being real in this sense does not make the humanity of Christ into a hypostasis, or a second person. John argues, with reference to Cyril of Alexandria and Athanasius, the closeness of the hypostasis concept to ‘reality’ or ‘existence’.<sup>62</sup> He therefore gives to it a meaning ‘through which what is common to *ousia* and *hypostasis* is brought into relief and what is special, which differentiates both, is bracketed...because it is at the same time important for a new concept which the Grammarian here introduces into the discussion, namely that of the *enhypostaton*.’<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, in John’s use of the term *enhypostaton* to defend the reality of Christ’s human nature (by its existence in the hypostasis of the person of Christ) we see its ‘Fundamental meaning: it is existence, reality, in the sense of ὑπαρξίς’. This emerges out of John’s struggle for his ‘formula of two *ousiai*’. With respect to reality, *ousia* is equivalent to hypostasis. The distinction is not determined by a sense of reality, but in the mode of existing: ‘the *ousia* exists as the universal in the individuals, while the hypostasis signifies the final, concrete individual substance.’ It is therefore

<sup>60</sup> U. M. Lang cites John of Caesarea, *Apologia Concilii Chalcedonensis*, 55.200-56.211.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Part II. Vol. II., p. 54.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Part II. Vol. II., p. 58.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. Vol. II., p.58. Grillmeier cites John’s *Apologia*.

clear that the enhypostaton is definitely present in the hypostasis. This means: ‘to be real as hypostasis. The prefix *en* does not refer to another being in which this hypostasis would inexist, but rather to the proper reality of this concrete enhypostaton.’<sup>64</sup>

The Grammarian, however, is hesitant to express both divine and human substances (natures) of Christ as enypostatos, evidently out of concern that this might imply two separate (proper) individuals, i.e. hypostases. Rather, John argues that ἐνυπόστατος, if applied to substance or nature, simply indicates real existence without reference to mode. Therefore, being ἐνυπόστατος does not imply that it is a proper hypostasis over the common substance (cf. Lang 1998:637). The Grammarian concludes that:

Consequently we do not say that our [i.e. the human] substance is *enhypostatos* in Christ, as a characteristic hypostasis on its own and being a prosopon, but insofar as it has a concrete existence and is. For sometimes hypostasis, i.e. substance, indicates having a concrete existence, as is shown when it is deprived of the properties characteristic of it and seen as belonging to the prosopon.<sup>65</sup>

John’s point of emphasis with respect to ἐνυπόστατος simply means that the humanity of Christ enjoys real existence, but an existence separate from that which characterizes the individual or prosopon. John furthermore asserts that ‘τό ὕφεστηκεναι’ (i.e. concrete existence) can be attributed to the ousia even if it does not contain the properties necessary to make it a prosopon. Ousia, therefore, may be called ἐνυπόστατος. The question remains, however, in what way can the ousia (Christ’s human nature) exist concretely if not as a hypostasis or prosopon of its own? John’s response is that the human nature is ἐνυπόστατος in Christ (cf. Lang 1998:637-38).

John responds to Severus’ argument (that there is no nature without hypostasis), and specifies how the human ousia (nature) of Christ is united ἐνυπόστατως with the divine hypostasis of the Logos, and explains that which belongs to the flesh becomes the property of the Logos since it is his own flesh. Based upon John’s interpretation of Cyrillian Christology, this appropriation of the ousia implies that the human nature of Christ is taken up

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Part II. Vol. II., p. 63. Grillmeier cites John’s *Apologia*.

<sup>65</sup> U.M. Lang cites John of Caesarea, *Apologia Concilii Chalcedonensis*, 55.203-56.208.

into the hypostasis of the Son of God in a way that individual existence is communicated to it as the ensouled flesh that becomes proper to Him (cf. Lang 1998:638).

This is the way in which the human nature of Christ is to be conceived as individualized. The Grammarian's formula ἕνωσις ἐνυπόστατος serves the purpose to denote this unique manner of existence.<sup>66</sup>

John emphasizes the reality of the two natures of Christ and dismisses Severus' charge of Nestorianism by arguing that both divinity and humanity are proper to Christ. The divine nature belongs to Christ by virtue of His divine essence (τῇ φύσει), whereas the human nature belongs to Him by virtue of its union with the Logos (ἐνυπόστατος ἕνωσις). John's use of the term ἐνυπόστατος therefore allows him to avoid any notion that each nature has a hypostasis of its own (cf. 1998:639). John concludes that:

Two or more natures can be seen in one and the same prosopon, when there is an *enhypostatos* union of them. For if they were divided, each would be recognized in a person of its own hypostasis.<sup>67</sup>

Furthermore, John uses the term ἐνυπόστατος to express the reality of Christ's human nature whose mode of existence is realized in an individualized hypostasis, and dismisses any thought of existence as an accident, which is properly speaking, ἀνυπόστατα. Therefore, based on John's use of the formula ἐνυπόστατος ἕνωσις, which indicates that both the divinity and humanity of Christ exist in one hypostasis of the Logos, they can be realized in the same prosopon. Moreover, John's argument is peculiar to the person of Christ; that is, the human nature exists in a real and distinct essence in the person of Christ as *enhypostatos*. While John uses the term *enhypostatos* to primarily mean 'having a concrete existence', it implies that a common nature or substance always exists as being individualized *in* a hypostasis. This describes the peculiarity of the incarnation where the ensouled flesh is taken up into the hypostasis of the Son of God, and as such, is given individual existence in such a unique manner (cf. Lang 1998:639-40).

<sup>66</sup> U.M. Lang cites John of Caesarea, *Apologia Concilii Chalcedonensis*, 57.259-61.

<sup>67</sup> Lang cites John of Caesarea, *Capitula XVII contra Monophysitas*: CCG 1, 64.107-10, cf. 122-24.

### 2.2.3 Leontius of Byzantium

Perhaps the most controversial of patristic orthodox writers is Leontius of Byzantium (c. 490-544) whose use of the term *enpostaton* to describe the human nature of Christ has spawned considerable theological debate. Virtually all scholars today agree that Leontius of Byzantium is the same sixth century monk who wrote *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* (CNE) in his defense of Christ's human nature against the Eutychian heresy. Leontius also participated in several important theological discussions, which included a formal conference between the Chalcedonians and the Monophysites in 533 where he 'endeavors to balance the emphasis of Leo and Chalcedon on distinctiveness by a further exploration of the unity of Christ'.<sup>68</sup>

Leontius wrote *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* to demonstrate that the formula of Chalcedon is the 'golden' mean between two diametrically opposed but equally heretical positions. That is, Leontius set out to refute the Nestorian and Monophysite arguments that question the viability of the Chalcedon position.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, as a harmonizer of Cyril and Chalcedon Leontius uses the term *enhypostatos* to explain how the human nature of Christ exists in the hypostasis of the Logos (not being an accident) and how two natures can exist concretely together while having only one hypostasis between them.<sup>70</sup> Leontius asserts that when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us He received into His own hypostasis a human nature that was perfect and entire, the result of which is that both the divine and human natures exist together without division or confusion in the one pre-existent hypostasis of the Logos. While the human nature does not possess a separate hypostasis of its own, it is united with the divine nature in the hypostasis of the Logos. In other words, the human nature is 'enhypostatic'.<sup>71</sup>

The principle question raised with respect to Leontius is: did he use the term *enpostaton* to develop a new philosophical understanding of the human nature of Christ (reaching beyond Chalcedon) or simply as a means to affirm the Chalcedonian definition of Christ's human nature? This question of interpretation is centered on the sixth-century monk's alleged

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Edward Rochie Hardy, Editor. *Christology of the Later Fathers*, Vol. III., p. 375.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Dirk Krausmüller, 'Making Sense of the Formula of Chalcedon: the Cappadocians and Aristotle in Leontius of Byzantium's *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*', *Vigiliae Christianae* 65 (2011) p. 486.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. John J. Lynch, 'Leontius of Byzantium: A Cyrillian Christology' *Theological Studies* 36 1975, p. 459.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Silas Rees, 'Leontius of Byzantium and His Defense of the Council of Chalcedon', *Harvard Theological Review* April 1, 1931, pp. 111-12.

redefinition of the term enypostaton to represent a nature that does not have existence in its own hypostasis, but in the hypostasis of another nature. This opinion presupposes that Leontius formulated a philosophical theory with the help of a new meaning for enypostaton as a way to help explain how two natures can exist in a single hypostasis.<sup>72</sup>

A proper understanding of Leontius' use of the term enypostaton therefore becomes the crucial factor in interpreting his ontological view of the human nature of Christ. With this in mind, we take notice that Leontius' aim in Book 3 of *CNE* was to oppose the Monophysites without compromising with the Nestorians as he sought to clarify the use of the terms hypostasis and ousia to describe the human nature of Christ (Shults 1996:434). Leontius states as his purpose in the prologue:

[Since] the definition of [the terms] hypostasis and ousia...remains confused and vague among those now counted wise, I have undertaken to elucidate and clarify [them]. This is the christological exigency that Leontius is addressing.<sup>73</sup>

Given therefore that Leontius' aim in Book 3 of *CNE* is to develop a polemic against anti-Chalcedonian views of Christ's human nature, the question is how did Leontius use the term enypostaton to define the human nature of Christ? The traditional reading of Leontius understood him to give the term 'enypostasized' a new and nontraditional metaphysical meaning that enabled him to avoid the heresy that Jesus Christ existed in two hypostases. This interpretation of Leontius is commonly attributed primarily to the influence of Friedrich Loofs.<sup>74</sup>

Friedrich Loofs' interpretation became a critical factor in influencing how contemporary theologians viewed Leontius' development of the human nature of Christ. Loofs interpreted Leontius in a way that reached beyond the Chalcedonian formula as he enquired if one can speak of a terminological progress in understanding the person of Jesus Christ after the Council of Chalcedon, and the ongoing conflicts between defenders and opponents of its formula. Loofs

<sup>72</sup> Cf. F. LeRon Shults, 'A Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth', *Theological Investigations*, 1996 p. 431.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. F. LeRon Shults, 'A Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth', *Theological Investigations* (1996) 431. Shults cites David Evans' translation of *Leontius of Byzantium* 15.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. F. LeRon Shults, 'A Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth', *Theological Investigations*, 1996, p. 436.

claimed that Leontius used the term enhypostatos to express the human nature of Christ as existing not ‘in itself’ but ‘within something else’, namely the incarnate Logos.<sup>75</sup>

Loofs claimed that Leontius developed the concept of something having a hypostasis ‘not in itself’, but in the hypostasis of ‘another nature’. If this translation proved to be accurate it would indeed suggest a dramatic departure from the Chalcedonian language. Moreover, based upon the influence of Loofs, this reading of Leontius was almost unanimously accepted as playing a special role in the development of Christian doctrine (cf. Shults 1996:436). Loofs interprets Leontius to say:

The human nature in Christ is not anhypostatos, nor itself an hypostasis, but enhypostatos (1277D), that is, it has its *hypostenai εν το λογο* (1944C) (cf. 1996:437).<sup>76</sup>

Loofs, however, misinterpreted Leontius’ use of the term enhypostaton to mean that which exists within something else, rather than that which has concrete existence in itself. Given therefore a proper interpretation of Leontius, he did not advance much beyond Chalcedon in his ontological view of the human nature of Christ (cf. Shults 1999:437).<sup>77</sup>

Chalcedon speaks of one hypostasis only. It seems that contrary to an ‘*opinio communis*’ Leontius of Byzantium has not advanced much further. It was believed (wrongly) that Leontius had found another meaning of *hypostasis* which went well beyond the one given here.<sup>78</sup>

The proper interpretation of the term enhypostaton means possession of concrete existence, ‘that which is enhypostaton has being and actuality in itself. Thereby it is also shown that the prefix *en* in the compound word has been falsely interpreted. It is the opposite of the alpha privativum (e.g. a-hypostaton) and means precisely the possession of that property which was denied by the

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Matthias Gockel, ‘A Dubious Christological Formula? Leontius of Byzantium and Christology After Chalcedon’ *Journal of Theological Studies*, 2000, p. 517. Gockel notes that it was Loofs’ study entitled *Leontius von Byzanz und die gleichnamigen Schriftsteller der griechischen Kirche*, which began a revival of scholarship on Leontius. This work was first published in O. von Gebhardt and A. von Harnack (eds.), *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1888), pp. 1-317.

<sup>76</sup> Shults is quoting his own translation of Friedrich Loofs, ‘Leontius von Byzanz’, p. 65.

<sup>77</sup> Aloys Grillmeier notes that precisely at the time of Leontius the old meaning of enhypostatos as ‘in its own reality’ still held (cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2, Part 2, p. 195).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. F. LeRon Shults, ‘Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth’, *Theological Investigations*, 1996, pp. 436-47 where Shults cites Grillmeier in ‘The Understanding of the Christological Definitions’, p. 80.



negation. Enhypostaton thus means nothing other than ‘to have a concrete existence,’ ‘to have actuality’<sup>79</sup>.

Loofs misinterpreted a passage in Leontius’ *CNE* where Leontius introduces the distinction between hypostasis (referring to an individual) and enhypostaton (referring to substance).

*Hypostasis*, gentlemen, and the *enhypostatized* (ἐνυπόστατον) are not one and the same thing. For hypostasis refers to the *individuum*, but hypostatic to the essence; and hypostasis defines the person (*prosopon*) by means of the particular characteristics; the *enhypostatized* (ἐνυπόστατον) means, however, that it is not an accident.<sup>80</sup>

The debated sentence in Leontius’ work *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* reads:

...the enhypostasized means, however, that it is not an accident; [the latter] has its being in another and is not perceived in itself; of this kind are all qualities...<sup>81</sup>

Loofs’ error is found in his attributing the phrase ‘has its being in another’ to enhypostaton instead of συμβεβηκός. Contrary to Loofs’ interpretation, Leontius emphasizes that while the enhypostaton is not the same as a hypostasis; it exists as its own reality and is not an accident (cf. Gockel 2000:518).<sup>82</sup> Moreover, Leontius distinguishes between hypostasis and physis (Gockel 2000:518):

...a nature is not hypostasis, because there is no reversal: a hypostasis is indeed nature, but a nature is not yet hypostasis. A nature admits of the definition of being (εἶναι), but a hypostasis also admits of the definition of being by itself καθ’ ἑαυτο εἶναι. The former looks to the definition of species, while the latter signifies individuality. And the former indicates the character of a general object, while the latter distinguishes what is particular from what is common (2000:518-19).<sup>83</sup>

Leontius explains that the human nature does not possess a separate hypostasis of its own, but is united with the divine nature in the hypostasis of the Logos. In his argument against the Nestorians Leontius states:

<sup>79</sup> Shults cites Grillmeier in *Die anthropologisch-christologische Sprache*, p. 68-69.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2, Part 2, p. 194 where Grillmeier cites Leontius in *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos (CNE)*.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2. Part 2, p. 194.

<sup>82</sup> Gockel cites Grillmeier in *Christ in Christian Tradition*, pp. 196-7.

<sup>83</sup> Gockel cites Grillmeier in *Patrologia Graeca (PG)* 86, 1280A3-10.



Yet we do not hold that the human nature of Christ existed in some hypostasis peculiar to it alone...but in the hypostasis of the Logos, which existed before it...For the hypostasis of the Logos has the divine nature and properties, but it does not stand in these alone. It abounds in those characteristics which result from the assumption of the more recent [i.e. the human] nature. We have to notice this feature similarly in red-hot iron. The mass of iron, pre-existing in its own hypostasis, is subsequently placed in the furnace, when a nature of fire is begotten in it, in addition to its original nature. This fire had no existence, either at a previous time or in its own hypostasis. It exists only in the hypostasis of the iron.<sup>84</sup>

Furthermore, Leontius draws the ontological distinction between enhypostaton and anhypostaton where he argues against the notion that a human nature in Christ must either exist as a separate human hypostasis or else admit that this human nature is merely a figment of the imagination (cf. Krausmüller 2011:487). Leontius states:

...enhypostaton indicates that something is not an accident, which has its being in another and is not seen in itself...A person who says that a nature, which is anhypostaton, does not exist makes a true statement but he does not draw a correct conclusion when he infers from it that the opposite of anhypostatos is a hypostasis...A nature or substance, which is anhypostatos, will therefore never exist, but nature is not hypostasis because the argument is not reversible: hypostasis is also nature but nature is not yet also hypostasis.<sup>85</sup>

Although Leontius' understanding of the ontological relationship between hypostasis and physis applies to the human nature of Christ, he leaves unclear the distinction between hypostasis and physis... 'it follows that the manhood of Christ would also have to be characterized as *hypostasis*. For Jesus of Nazareth is a concrete individual human being; he has his *notao characteristicae* which distinguish him as a human being from other human beings.'<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Silas Rees, 'Leontius of Byzantium and His Defense of the Council of Chalcedon', *Harvard Theological Review* April 1, 1931, p. 112 where Rees cites Leontius in Migne, 86, 1552-1553.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Dirk Krausmüller, 'Making Sense of the Formula of Chalcedon: the Cappadocians and Aristotle in Leontius of Byzantium's *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*', *Vigiliae Christianae* 65 (2011) p. 487 where Krausmüller cites Leontius of Byzantium, *CNE*, PG 86, 1277C-1280A; ed. Daley, p. 8, 1. 20-p. 9, 1.9.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier in 'The Understanding of the Christological Definitions of Both (Oriental-Orthodox and Roman-Catholic) Traditions in Light of the Post-Chalcedonian Theology (Analysis of Terminologies in a conceptual Framework)', in *Christ in East and West*, pp. 65-82, at p. 80.

Furthermore, throughout *CNE* Leontius does not realize the consequence of his distinction between nature and *hypostasis*. ‘Not even once does he ask himself whether the human nature of Christ is individualized through the *idia* [of a human being].’<sup>87</sup>

In contrast to his work in *CNE*, Leontius does not distinguish between hypostasis and enhypostasis in his work entitled *Epilyseis*. While he relates nature (physis) to substance (*ousia*), he does not further develop the relationship between enhypostasis and being. While in *CNE* he relates hypostasis to being as ‘being in itself’, in *Epilyseis* hypostasis is simply characterized by the ratio of accidents. In both works hypostasis is somehow related to the individual, but is also characterized by accidents in the *Epilyseis*. In the end, the relation between nature and hypostasis remains unexplained by Leontius. Furthermore, the distinction between substance and hypostasis confuses rather than clarifies the idea of hypostasis in relation to the enhypostasis. Perhaps this lack of clarity can be attributed to Leontius’ desire to avoid the charge of Nestorianism in his debate with a miaphysite. Notwithstanding this difficulty, in both treatises Leontius argues that the properties of the natures are preserved in their union in the one hypostasis of Christ (Gockel 2000:522).

We note here in his paper entitled ‘A Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth’ that F. LeRon Shults claims (and rightly so) that Karl Barth appropriated anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to describe the human nature of Christ, which moves beyond the autonomous treatment of these terms by Leontius of Byzantium. In this way Barth understands the anhypostasis to express (negatively) that the human nature of Christ has no subsistence outside its union with the Logos, but realizes its subsistence positively as enhypostasis in this union. Shults, however, further argues that Barth appropriated anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula based upon the invention of Protestant Scholasticism through his reading of Heinrich Heppe and Heinrich Schmid.

We argue against Shults and will show that the Protestant Scholastics appropriated anhypostasis and enhypostasis consistent with the patristic Fathers (including Leontius of Byzantium) as autonomous concepts to explain the human nature of Christ. Matthias Gockel makes this point in his paper entitled ‘A Dubious Christological Formula? Leontius of Byzantium and the

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2. Part 2, p. 193.

Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis Theory'. Gockel notes that Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis and anhypostasis as a dual formula is an innovation all his own. We agree with Gockel, but will further argue that Barth's adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is not only unique to his Christology, but in fact becomes the ontological foundation to his Christology as a whole.

#### 2.2.4 Leontius of Jerusalem

Leontius of Jerusalem is recognized as the sixth century contemporary of Leontius of Byzantium who as a member of Justinian's court wrote between the years 538-544. According to manuscript tradition, 'the all-wise monk lord Leontius of Jerusalem' wrote two theological treatises called 'Against the Nestorians' and 'Against the Monophysites'. As indicated by these titles, Leontius used these treatises to defend the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures of Christ against both Nestorian and Monophysite attacks.<sup>88</sup> In his polemic Leontius sought to synthesize the writings of Cyril and Chalcedon in defense of the human nature of Christ.<sup>89</sup> Compared to Leontius of Byzantium, Leontius of Jerusalem appears as the sharper thinker who introduces a more distinctive version of the one subject in Christ using the concept of one hypostasis with two natures.<sup>90</sup>

The sixth century concept of hypostasis was generally understood to be a nature with properties, where nature is understood as the foundation of being and properties being added to render an individual (or hypostasis). Leontius, however, marks a distinct shift in this thinking by arguing that the hypostasis is conceptually distinguished from natures and not produced by them. We see therefore in Leontius of Jerusalem an important transition in the ontological expression of Christ where the hypostasis takes priority over nature as the foundation of nature's existence. For Leontius, 'the hypostasis itself is the foundation and not the product of being: it is the ὑπτόκειμένον πράγμα, 'the underlying reality,' or if you will, the 'real subject'.'<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Dirk Krausmüller, 'Leontius of Jerusalem, a Theologian of the Seventh Century', *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, Vol 52, Pt 2, October 2001.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Kenneth Paul Wesche, 'The Christology of Leontius of Jerusalem Monophysite or Chalcedonian?' *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 1987, p. 65.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2. Part 2, p. 276.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Kenneth Paul Wesche, 'The Christology of Leontius of Jerusalem Monophysite or Chalcedonian?' *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 1987, p. 73.

The conceptual problems confronted by Leontius of Byzantium with respect to nature and hypostasis were dealt with more successfully by Leontius of Jerusalem who understands enhypostaton as ‘having a concrete existence.’ The divine and human natures are said to be ‘enhypostasized’, or realized, in one hypostasis.<sup>92</sup> The first advance of Leontius of Jerusalem is that he consciously distinguished between a nature union (*unio in natura et secundum naturam*) and a *hypostasis* union (*unio in hypostasi et secundum hypostasim*)...in the incarnation ‘the Logos does not assume an additional *hypostasis* in order now to attain the perfection of the hypostasis; he possesses only the (hypostasis) which he also had after the addition of the *nature* which he did not have’.<sup>93</sup>

Moreover, and perhaps just as important in this context is Leontius’ claim that the human nature of Christ does not exist anhypostaton, nor does it exist idiohypostaton (of its own) because it possesses its hypostasis in the Logos (Gockel 2000:523). Leontius states that:

The two natures, we say, subsist in one and the same hypostasis, admittedly not as if one of the two could be in it anhypostatically, but rather that both can subsist in the common hypostasis...whereby each of the two natures is enhypostatic. For in order to be something, it is necessary that this same thing is also wholly on its own. If the natures have being, they must also subsist ὑφίστημι and be enhypostatic. But because they are not independent of each other...it is not necessary that each of the two exists on its own. Thus it is clear that the two *enhypostata* must not be *heterohypostata* (=hypostasis beside hypostasis), but are thought of as being in one and the same *hypostasis*.<sup>94</sup>

Leontius of Jerusalem clearly distinguishes the human nature of Jesus from the hypostasis in which it exists (the pre-existent Logos) because the divine act affects both the creation (οὐσιώσις) of the human nature and its unification (συνουσιώσις) with the divine hypostasis (Gockel 2000:524).

In the polemical treatise *Adversus Nestorianos* Leontius attributes ἐνυπόστατος to (οὐσία / φύσις) in the sense of ‘having concrete existence’ while also being individualized in a hypostasis. He explains that whereas as in the Trinity there are ‘τρεις ὑποστάσεις ἐνουσιους ἐν

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Matthias Gockel, ‘A Dubious Christological Formula? Leontius of Byzantium and Christology After Chalcedon’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, 2000, p. 523.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2, Part 2, pp. 276-77 where Grillmeier also cites Leontius of Jerusalem in *Contra Nestorianos* (CN) VII, 4: PG 86, 1768aA.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2, Part 2, p. 285 where Grillmeier translates Leontius of Jerusalem in *Contra Nestorianos* (CN) 2.13, PG 86, 1561 B8-C9.

μία οὐσία’, so in Christ there are ‘φύσεις...ἐνυποστάτους δύο ἐν μία ὑποστάσει’. With this explanation Leontius first denies that the two natures of Christ are ἀνυπόστατοι (without concrete reality), and secondly denies that two hypostases exist in Christ. Much like John of Caesarea, Leontius is responding to the misconceived interpretation of the Chalcedonian definition of two natures in Christ as being ἑτερουπόστατοι or ἰδιουπόστατοι, implying a doctrine of two hypostases (Lang 1998:640-41).

Furthermore, Leontius of Jerusalem (again like John of Caesarea before him) draws attention to the necessary ontology of the divine and human natures of Christ existing concretely as ἐνυπόστατοι. The term *enhypostatos*, therefore, represents the two natures of Christ existing in one and the same hypostasis (Lang 1998:641): Leontius explains:

For we say that the two natures concretely exist in one and the same hypostasis, not as if one of them could exist without a hypostasis in it, but as if both could subsist in the one common hypostasis; and so each of the two is *enhypostatos* according to one and the same hypostasis. Thus it is evident that the *enhypostaton* cannot be *heterohypostaton*, but must be thought of in one and the same hypostasis for both of them.<sup>95</sup>

Therefore, with respect to development of the hypostatic union in Christ we see in Leontius of Jerusalem a clear transition in ontological thought from that of Leontius of Byzantium.

Furthermore, Leontius of Jerusalem achieved a clearer interpretation of the hypostatic union. He affirmed that the Logos ‘hypostatically inserted (ἐνυπέστησεν) the flesh into his own hypostasis (τῇ ἰδίᾳ ὑποστάσει) and not into that of a simple human being’. With this statement ‘the history of a great Christological concept begins’: as such the verb (ὑφίστημι / ὑποστάναι) with the prefix ἐν becomes ‘the technical expression for ‘to cause to subsist in’ and in the second aorist for ‘to subsist in’’. The theological result is that Leontius can propose that ‘simultaneously with the creation of Christ’s human nature, and with the institution of its physical existence, it becomes subsistent in the hypostasis of the Word. It exists only as the existence of the Word in the world, never as a separate existence of an independent human subject’ (Gockel 2000:525).<sup>96</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Gockel cites Leontius of Jerusalem in *Adversus Nestorianos* II.13: 1651B.

<sup>96</sup> Gockel cites Grillmeier in ‘The Understanding of the Christological Definitions’, p. 81, with reference to CN 2.7, PG 86, 1552A-1553B.

Moreover, Leontius defines hypostasis as that which underlies the union of one or more natures, but not the union of natures themselves. Rather, the hypostasis is an invisible point that can be made more complex by additions, but cannot be diminished to nothing because in its simplicity it is not comprised of parts. Leontius anticipates the Trinitarian implications given this ontological context by distinguishing hypostasis from physis (or nature); in that hypostasis is a particular, but not a particular nature (Wesche 1987:73-74).<sup>97</sup>

Leontius concludes that because the hypostasis of Christ is separated from all human beings, and natures can be united in the same hypostasis without confusion, the hypostasis is that essence governing a nature existing in distinction from another nature. The human nature therefore maintains its own individual and distinct nature even in union with the nature of the divine Logos. However, it is not possible for a hypostasis to be united to another (Wesche 1987:75-76).

So then, since the hypostasis [of Christ] is separated from all other men who exist outside of him, and natures can be united to one another without confusion in a hypostasis in which their proper definitions are not destroyed by the other; then to exist in distinctions and separations from every nature does not belong to the principle of nature but to the principle of hypostasis. Surely the human nature is not prevented from being united to the nature of the Divine Logos since it remains nature as such and shows its natural definition even in the union! But it is impossible that a hypostasis should be united to another hypostasis for then two hypostaseis, that is to say, [two] ‘standing away from another’ [hypostaseis] would be maintained; but this being separate from others is the most intimate property of individuals.<sup>98</sup>

That Leontius distinguishes between hypostasis and nature, where hypostasis is the foundation rather than the product of its constitution, allows him to defend charges that his Christology purports the production of a new composite physis or hypostasis. Leontius makes this point clear:

The union is of natures in the hypostasis, that is to say, there is a union of one nature with the other, but from these natures there has not been produced a composite nature, since they are not united by confusion, nor is there a union of hypostaseis since the union is not of hypostaseis. But the properties of the hypostasis of the Logos have become more composite, since it accumulates more properties in itself along with its

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<sup>97</sup> Wesche cites Leontius of Jerusalem in Adv. Nest. I.42: col. 1501D 10-13.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. cols. 1549D 7-1552B 7.

own simple properties after the incarnation, which proves that neither his nature nor his hypostasis is composite or mutable.<sup>99</sup>

Leontius also understands the divine hypostasis of the Logos to be a composite possessing more than one property, which becomes more composite through the addition of the properties of humanity. The simple hypostasis of the Logos therefore combines properties of the divine and human natures. The hypostasis itself, however, remains simple, indivisible, and immutable. Being the foundation and principle of the existence of natures, the hypostasis is distinguished conceptually from its own constitution of natures, being able to receive new natures without being altered. The hypostasis as one subject, however, cannot be united with another hypostasis without either becoming a juxtaposition of two subjects, which is not a true union, or becoming another subject altogether resulting in its alteration. The hypostasis therefore is open to receive other natures and properties, but not another hypostasis. That being said, Leontius does not view the human nature of Christ as being absorbed into the hypostasis of the Logos, but remains as a ‘particular nature’ in this union (Wesche 1987:79-80). Leontius states that:

We say the Logos assumed a certain particular nature from our nature into his own hypostasis.<sup>100</sup>

In this context Leontius uses the analogy of an iron immersed in fire to explain how a nature can be particular without being a hypostasis (Wesche 1987:80-81). Leontius argues:

But we say that just as the iron which is made red-hot in the furnace does not lose any part of its hypostasis from the species of the fire, but admits only the nature into its own hypostasis—for likewise the hypostasis of the fire in the furnace remains, lacking nothing, even after the iron becomes red-hot—so also we say that the Logos assumed from our nature a somewhat particular nature (φύσιν ἰδικήν τίναν) into his own hypostasis.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. I.20: col. 1485D 2-10.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. col. 1458C 1ff.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. C 7-D 2.



Leontius uses the term ‘particular’ (ιδική) to explain how the particularity of Christ’s human nature does not extend to its separation from His divine nature in union with the divine hypostasis (Wesche 1987:81). Leontius states:

For the man in Christ is not particular, but it shares [with the divine nature the one hypostasis of the Logos (αντί γὰρ ιδικής, κοινήν)]; and instead of a human hypostasis it has acquired a divine hypostasis; instead of being a term that refers to a whole hypostasis, in the hypostasis of the Logos the man is seen as a part, for this is to be sure the ultimate blessedness for the man [in Christ].<sup>102</sup>

Because the human nature remains particular in its union with the hypostasis, it is not mingled or confused with the divine nature, and therefore sustains its own natural definition in union with the Logos. Nature, however, does not exist except in a hypostasis. There is no such thing as nature by itself (Wesche 1987:82–83). Leontius states:

In all other mere men, there is no nature of man that can be observed by itself, but each nature belongs to a particular someone, and is seen as an enhypostasized nature.<sup>103</sup>

Leontius further argues that the clearest evidence demonstrating the human nature maintains its full reality in unity with the Logos is that in its union, the Logos’ mode of existence changes, but not His divine nature. This is manifest in the Virgin birth where the hypostasis of the Logos (not the divine nature) exists in a different mode; that is, in the flesh (Wesche 1987:88). Leontius states that:

When he was born of the woman in time he was not brought into existence, but into a certain mode of existence (οὐκ ἐς τὸ εἶναι, ἀλλ’ εἰς τὸ τοιῶσδε εἶναι).<sup>104</sup>

Ontologically speaking, Leontius explains that the hypostasis of Christ is not the mode of existence (being immutable) but that which experiences the change in the mode of existence when it assumes the human nature (Wesche 1987:88). Regarding Christ:

He is born by a certain type of generation, not by being transformed, but at the same time, he does not remain absolutely simple as before (οὐδέ απλῶς μένων

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. V.30.

<sup>103</sup> Wesche cites Leontius in Adv. Nest. V.28: col. 1748D 3ff.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. IV.18: col. 1648C 10f.



γυμνός), nor does he remain in his simple existence (εἰς τὸ εἶναι), nor does he remain in the manner of existence which describes him before, but he is now with the flesh; and henceforth I dare to say his hypostasis is altered in its manner of being in this way (εἰς τὸ τοιῶσδε εἶναι τὸ λοιπὸν ἀλλοιωθέντα πῶς τὴν ὑπόστασιν), not because there is a change of the Logos' properties, or because there is a change of the properties as God; but because he receives and acquires the other properties of Jesus, and he acquires the properties of the human nature (τὸν ἄνθρωπον) in the same one hypostasis of the Logos himself which increases and receives more properties, both hypostatic and natural, which surpass all prosopa on either side and make it consubstantial [to God and man]. Therefore, in no way is he formed as the Logos, but the Logos himself is formed as the Christ; and this happens only in reference to one of his parts, the flesh."<sup>105</sup>

For Leontius, the hypostasis is the foundation of existence and union of natures that are real and whose properties exist only in the hypostasis, and not in each other. In the person of Jesus the human nature contributes its properties to the Logos' hypostasis making it now visible and corporeal. Even so, the hypostasis itself remains unchanged as the foundation of being (Wesche 1987:89). Leontius explains:

There was not a different hypostasis before, and a different one after [the incarnation], but it was the same. Even so, the Logos appears differently in his different states (ἄλλως δέ και ἄλλως ἐμφαινόμενος ὁ Λόγος) since before [his incarnation] his hypostasis was invisible only, but now it is visible on account of the visible covering which it has assumed into itself (Wesche 1987:89).<sup>106</sup>

Leontius therefore understands all natures to be enpostaton (Shults 1999:438). As the foundation and principle of existence the hypostasis becomes more composite in receiving natures and their properties into its being. Through the union of the human nature to the divine nature of the Logos, the incarnate Logos is now able to do in union what He cannot do in either nature by itself (Wesche 1987:90-91).

Furthermore, while for Leontius the union of the human nature renders the divine Logos truly incarnate, the human nature is in no way lost or merged into the immensity of the Logos' divinity. The Logos becomes fully humanity through the assumption of a complete and particular human nature, which renders the Logos as real humanity in His existence as clearly evidenced in the Passion of the Logos (Wesche 1987:92).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. IV.42: col. 1716C 8-D 7.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. I.30: col. 1496D 8-11.

### 2.2.5 John of Damascus

In the eight century John of Damascus wrote *De fide orthodox* as concise theological treaty against heresy. Incorporating the thinking of orthodox thinkers, which included Cyril of Alexandria and Leontius of Byzantium, John's aim in this work was not to submit novel views of his own, but to collect into one theological work the thinking of the ancients.<sup>107</sup> John of Damascus also worked to reformulate the Christology of Chalcedon by setting out his understanding of the terms anhypostatos, enhypostatos, and hypostasis (Lang 1998: 649). As such John uses the terms anypostatton and enypostatton similar to Cyril and Leontius of Byzantium to explain the human nature of Christ. In Book 3, Chapter 9, of *De fide orthodox*, John refers directly to Leontius's argument in Chapter 1 of *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*, and asserts that the flesh and the Word have one and the same substance. The Damascene, therefore, argues that one cannot speak of either nature as being anypostatton (cf. Shults 1999:438). John responds to the question whether there is any nature that does not have subsistence by stating:

For although there is no nature without subsistence, nor essence apart from person (since in truth it is in persons and subsistences that essence and nature are to be contemplated), yet it does not necessarily follow that the natures that are united in subsistence should have each its own proper subsistence. For after they have come together in one subsistence, it is possible that neither should they be without subsistence, nor should each have its own peculiar subsistence, but that each should have one and the same subsistence... For the flesh of God the Word did not subsist as an independent subsistence, nor did there arise another subsistence besides that of God the Word, but as it existed in that it became rather a subsistence which subsisted in another, than one which was an independent subsistence. Wherefore, neither does it lack subsistence altogether, nor yet is there thus introduced into the Trinity another subsistence.<sup>108</sup>

John's development of the Chalcedonian formula demonstrates a more explicit explanation of Christ's humanity as enhypostatos, which denotes being in-existence in the hypostasis of the Logos (Lang 1998:648-49). The Damascene explains:

Again the nature which has been assumed by another hypostasis and has its existence in this is called *enhyposstaton*. For this reason also the flesh of the Lord which does not subsist by itself, not even for an instant, is not a hypostasis, but

<sup>107</sup> Cf. *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, John of Damascus, Prologue.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 9, John of Damascus, 'Exposition of the Orthodox Faith', p. 53.

rather *enhypostatos*; for it came to subsist in the hypostasis of the Logos, having been assumed by it, and has obtained and still has this very hypostasis.<sup>109</sup>

John seeks to clarify the terminological ambiguity left by the *De Sectis*<sup>110</sup> and introduces another sense of *enhypostatos* which describes a nature that has been taken up by another hypostasis through which it has its existence. This explains why the human nature does not subsist by itself and is not considered a hypostasis, but rather *enhypostatos* in relation to the Logos. This thinking is also put forward in the Damascene's work entitled the *Expositio Fidei* (Lang 1998:650). John explains:

For the flesh of the God-Logos did not subsist with its own subsistence, nor has it become another hypostasis in addition to the hypostasis of the God-Logos, but it has rather become *enhypostatos*, subsisting in it [i.e. the hypostasis of the God-Logos] and not a hypostasis for itself with its own subsistence. Therefore it is neither without hypostasis nor has it introduced another hypostasis into the Trinity.<sup>111</sup>

The interpretation of this passage has been disputed among scholars. While the late nineteenth century German theologian Josef Back<sup>112</sup> understands *enhypostatos* to mean 'inexistent', Daley<sup>113</sup> argues that such a translation is not necessary here. The use of the term *enhypostatos* in combination with the phrase 'ἐν αὐτῇ ὑποστασά' suggests that its use denotes the human nature's existence in the hypostasis of the Logos (Lang 1998:650-51).

In John's work entitled *Contra Jacobitas* he cites a passage from Leontius of Byzantium's *CNE* where Leontius formulates the difference between hypostasis and *enhypostaton* by defining a person as having characteristic properties; where the substance is distinct from an accident because it does not exist in another subject. John further develops Leontius' definition as he draws the distinction between that which is in something (τό ἐν τινι) and that which is (τό ἐν ὧ). Whereas, the ἐνούσιον is that which is in the substance as a collection of accidents indicating a hypostasis (but not itself the

<sup>109</sup> U.M. Lang cites John of Damascus, *Dialectica*. Fus. 45.17-22: I,110.

<sup>110</sup> U.M. Lang notes that the work entitled *De Sectis* was written by an unknown author in the defense of the Chalcedonian formula of two natures in one hypostasis.

<sup>111</sup> Lang cites John of Damascus in *Expositio fidei* 53.14-18 (III 9): ed. Kotter II, 128.

<sup>112</sup> Lang cites Josef Back in *Die Dogmengeschichte des Mittelalters vom christologischen Standpunkte oder Die mittelalterliche Christologie vom achten bis sechzehnten Jahrhundert. I. Theil. Die werdende Scholastik*, p. 58.

<sup>113</sup> Lang cites Daley in *The Christology of Leontius of Byzantium*, p. 17.

substance), the ἐνυπόστατον is not identical with the hypostasis, but is rather seen in the hypostasis. John's definition of ousia or 'whatever exists' as that 'which exists in what manner soever, whether on its own, whether with another thing or in another thing' certainly allows for its existence in another hypostasis. In this respect John gives two examples for in-existence: that of fire in a wick and that of the flesh of Christ in the eternal hypostasis of the Logos (Lang 1998:651).

We see also in another passage in *Contra Jacobitas* where John uses more explicit language related to enhypostatos to describe the in-existence of the humanity of Christ in the hypostasis of the Logos (Lang 1998:651). The Damascene explains:

The human nature of Christ is *enhypostatos* or, as I propose, in-existent, since it does not subsist as a proper hypostasis of its own, but has its concrete existence *in* the hypostasis of the Logos.<sup>114</sup>

Furthermore, John avoids identifying nature (or substance) with hypostasis to forestall the false conclusion drawn from the Chalcedonian definition that two natures imply two separate hypostases (concrete individuals), which was charged by the miaphysites against the 'Nestorianism' of the Council (Lang 1998:652).

We see this also in a passage taken from John Damascene's treatise entitled *De Natura Composita contra Acephalos*, which illustrates his application of the term ἐνυπόστατος to the union of divinity and humanity of Christ (Lang 1998:653). John states:

In some cases the *enhypostaton* means the substance, as it is seen in the hypostasis and exists on its own, while in other cases it denotes each of the individual components that have come into union in order to compose a single hypostasis. It is patent to which particular cases the second usage applies: as soul and body are united in human beings to compose one hypostasis, so the divinity and the humanity of Christ have come into union and effect one common composite hypostasis. In this respect both natures may be said to be ἐνυπόστατος.<sup>115</sup>

The material point here is that John of Damascus understands ἐνυπόστατος to represent real substance with respect to the union of divinity and humanity in Christ as one

<sup>114</sup> Lang cites John of Damascus, *Contra Jacobitas*, 79.10-14:IV, 136.

<sup>115</sup> Lang cites John of Damascus from his treatise entitled *De Natura Composita contra Acephalos*, 6.1-15: ed. Kotter IV, 413 f.

composite hypostasis. Just as the divine nature exists as real substance, so also the human exists as real substance.

### 2.2.6 Conclusion

We have examined the writings of four orthodox patristic Fathers who used the terms anypostaton and enypostaton to express the human nature of Christ in their defense of the Chalcedon formula: ‘one person with two natures’. In so doing we noted the problem facing all Chalcedonian apologists during this period to express how Christ’s human nature exists in its own reality in union with the Logos, yet not as a separate person within this union. We also noted in each of these patristic Fathers continuity in understanding Christ’s human nature to have real and separate existence as enypostaton in its union with the person of the Logos, and not anypostaton, which suggests the absence of real existence in this union.

John of Caesarea developed the concept of *ousia* as having reality in its own substance much like the hypostasis enjoys reality in its own substance, which in turn allowed John to appropriate to *ousia* its own function in establishing the two nature formula. In this way John uses *ousia* to describe the human nature of Christ and introduces the term enypostaton to explain the human nature of Christ as ‘existing’ or ‘real’ in the hypostasis of Christ. As such, John explains how two natures can be seen in the same person, being united enypostaton together in Christ.

Despite the theological debate over Leontius of Byzantium with respect to the term enypostaton, we concluded that he did not use enypostaton as a way to develop a new philosophical concept of the human nature of Christ having a hypostasis ‘not in itself’, but in the hypostasis of another nature. Rather, he simply used enypostaton as a way to affirm the Chalcedonian definition of human nature as a real substance in its being. While Leontius leaves unanswered the relationship between nature and hypostasis, he argues that the properties of the divine and human natures are preserved in their union in the one hypostasis of Christ.

Leontius of Jerusalem deals more successfully with the conceptual problems confronted by Leontius of Byzantium with respect to nature and hypostasis. Because ‘enypostaton’ means having concrete existence, the divine and human natures are ‘enypostasized’, or realized in one hypostasis. Leontius therefore asserts that Christ’s human nature does not exist as anhypostaton

because it possesses its hypostasis in the Logos. In this way the two natures subsist as individual realities in one and the same hypostasis.

Following the thinking of John of Caesarea, Leontius of Jerusalem emphasizes that the divine and human natures of Christ both exist concretely as enopostatoi; that is, in one and the same hypostasis. John, however, develops a clearer interpretation of the hypostatic union as he transitions from Leontius of Byzantium by stating that the Logos hypostatically inserted the flesh into His own hypostasis and not into that of a simple human being. The theological result is that Christ's human nature becomes subsistent and exists only as the existence of the Word, never as a separate existence of an independent human subject. Even so, the human nature of Christ is not absorbed into the hypostasis of the Logos, but remains a particular nature in this union. The hypostasis therefore is the foundation of existence and union of the divine and human natures that are real and exist only in the hypostasis, and not in each other.

John of Damascus cites Leontius of Byzantium in his use of the terms anypostaton and enypostaton to affirm that the flesh and the Word have one and the same substance, and argues that neither one can be understood as anypostaton (having no subsistence in itself). John further develops the Chalcedonian formula by expressing a more explicit explanation of Christ's human nature as enhypostatos, which denotes being in-existence in the hypostasis of the Logos. In this way the nature which has been assumed by another hypostasis has its existence in this so called enhypostaton. John also describes enhypostatos in the sense of a nature being taken up by another hypostasis through which it has its existence. This nature therefore lacks no hypostasis nor has it introduced another hypostasis into the Trinity. John further develops enypostaton from Leontius of Byzantium's definition by drawing the distinction between that which is in something and that which is (exists).

Based upon our analysis of these patristic Fathers we can therefore conclude that there is indeed consensus agreement in their use of the terms anhypostaton and enhypostaton to describe the human nature of Christ. We also see a historical progression of ontological development in the use of these terms rather than disagreement over the substance of the human nature of Christ. Furthermore, we find no departure or disparity from the language and thinking of Chalcedon in the use of these terms, but an affirmation of its definition: 'one person with two natures'.

In addition, the concept of anhypostatton is not used in a negative sense to describe the existence of Christ's human nature, but simply as a way to assert that its substance exists not in itself but in the person of the Logos. Therefore, the use of the terms anhypostatton and enhypostatton as a dual formula to describe the human nature of Christ is not a valid doctrinal expression of the orthodox patristic Fathers.

As we have noted, F. LeRon Shults argues that Karl Barth appropriated anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to describe the human nature of Christ, which moves beyond the autonomous treatment of these terms by the patristic Church Fathers based upon the invention of Protestant Scholasticism that Barth received through the reading of Heinrich Heppe and Heinrich Schmid. We argue against Shults and will show that the Protestant Scholastics appropriated anhypostasis and enhypostasis consistent with the patristic Fathers as autonomous concepts to explain the human nature of Christ.

We also noted Matthias Gockel's statement that Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula is an innovation all his own. We agree with Gockel, but will further argue that Barth's adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is not only unique to his Christology, but in fact becomes the ontological foundation to his Christology as a whole.

We now turn to the scholastic and post-scholastic writers and their understanding of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to express the human nature of Christ.

## 2.3 Scholastic and Post-scholastic Period Formulation

### 2.3.1 Prelude

In view of orthodox patristic writers and their formulation of the terms *anypostatos* and *enypostatos* to explain the human nature of Christ, we now turn our attention to the scholastic and post-scholastic period writers. In so doing we will consider how Lutheran and Reformed scholastics appropriated these terms, together with Thomas Aquinas, whose Christology weighed heavily upon this period as well.

In the post-scholastic period we will focus on the dogmatic compilations of Heinrich Schmid (Lutheran) in *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, and Heinrich Heppe (Reformed) in *Reformed Dogmatics*, both of whom cite the scholastics in their own appropriation of *anhypostasis* and *enhyposstasis*. It is from these texts that Barth first gained acquaintance with the terms *anhypostasis* and *enhyposstasis*.<sup>116</sup>

Historically speaking, F. LeRon Shults posits that the scholastics misappropriated *anhypostasis* and *enhyposstasis* to explain the human nature of Christ, and employed these terms in a way that contradicted their usage by the Greek Fathers (Shults 1996:443). While agreeing with Shults that the use of *anhypostasis* and *enhyposstasis* as a Christological formula cannot be found in the Church Fathers, U. M. Lang argues that neither can these terms be found in Protestant orthodoxy as a dual formula to describe the human nature of Christ (Lang 1998:631).

The question therefore before us is: how did orthodox Lutheran and Reformed writers of the scholastic and post-scholastic periods formulate the terms *anhypostasis* and *enhyposstasis* to explain the human nature of Christ? Furthermore, did their formulation of these terms depart from the patristic Fathers (as Shults suggests), or did their ontological understanding of Christ's

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<sup>116</sup> In his work entitled *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (1875) Heinrich Schmid develops not so much a Lutheran dogmatic text as it is a compilation of theological statements taken from the writings of fourteen prominent Lutheran theologians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Schmid uses these quotations to support and clarify the Christian faith developed in the early Lutheran tradition up through the time of Rationalism in a historical context (cf. *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Preface to the Reprint edition). Heinrich Heppe's work entitled *Reformed Dogmatics* (1861) is also a compendium—his of Reformed dogmatic writers—where he compiles these writings with the expressed intent to transmit the thinking of acknowledged representatives of Reformed orthodoxy.



human nature mirror the patristic Fathers in explaining the human nature of Christ? Or, more specifically:

1. Was there a consensus among Lutheran writers in their use and application of the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ?
2. If there was disagreement, what was it, and how did it impact their Christology?
3. Was there consensus among Reformed writers in their use and application of the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ?
4. If there was disagreement, what was it, and how did it bear upon on their Christology?
5. Did the Lutheran and Reformed writers differ in their Christology with regard to their formulation and application of the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis?

### 2.3.2 Lutheran Interpretation and Development

In addition to Protestant scholastic writers we also include Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274)<sup>117</sup> and his ontological development of Christ's human nature in view of Chalcedon. Aquinas agrees with the Chalcedonian formula of the two natures and argues that in Christ 'human nature is so united to the Word that the Word subsists in it'.<sup>118</sup> This implies that the human nature of Christ 'is more dignified in Christ than in us, for in us, existing as it were by itself, it has its own personality, whereas in Christ it exists in the person of the Word' (cf. Gockel 2000:526).<sup>119</sup>

Aquinas understands Christ's human nature to be an individual substance, 'yet because Christ's human nature does not exist separately by itself but in something more perfect, namely in the person of the Word of God, it follows that it does not have its own personality (*non habeat personalitatem propriam*)' (cf. 2000:526).<sup>120</sup> Aquinas, however, concludes that with respect to the subsistence of the human nature of Christ 'the assumed nature does not have its own proper personality, not because of the lack of something pertaining to the perfection of human nature,

<sup>117</sup> Thomas Aquinas develops his understanding of Chalcedon and Christ's human nature in *Summa Theologiae* IIIa and his response to the question whether 'the union of the incarnate Word was wrought in one person?' (cf. Matthias Gockel, 'A Dubious Christological Formula? Leontius of Byzantium and the Anhypostasis-Enhypostasis Theory', *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 51(2) 2000, p. 526). We include Aquinas in this section as an important point of contact between the patristic Fathers and the Protestant Scholastics with respect to understanding the Chalcedon definition of Jesus Christ who exists as one person with two natures. After Aquinas we transition to Johann Gerhard as the first Lutheran scholastic theologian in our discussion.

<sup>118</sup> Gockel cites Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 48: 'The Incarnate Word (3a.1-6)', p. 44.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. 44.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. 46.

but because of the addition of something surpassing human nature, which is union to a divine person (*unio ad divinam personam*)'.<sup>121</sup> While Aquinas does not use the technical term *enhypostaton* to describe the human nature of Christ, like the patristic Fathers, Aquinas argues that the human nature of Christ does not exist *idihypostaton*, but in its on reality in the person of Christ (2000:526).

...the person or hypostasis of Christ can be viewed in a twofold way. On the one hand, as it is in itself, it is always simple, as in the nature of the Word too. On the other hand, it is considered under the aspect of person or hypostasis, which means subsisting in some nature, and according to this the person of Christ subsists in two natures. Hence, although there is one subsisting reality, there are nonetheless two different aspects of its subsisting. Thus, it is called a subsisting person, as far as one [person] subsists in two [natures] (Gockel 2000:527).<sup>122</sup>

Furthermore, Aquinas is consistent in his understanding of Christ's human nature with that of the patristic Fathers and the protestant scholastics that followed him. Although Aquinas did not employ the terms *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* in his writings, he used the concept of *impersonalitas* to describe Christ's human nature as existing only in the person of the Word (Gockel 2000:527). The protestant scholastics would later use this term as a coherent translation of ἀνυποστασία and reflect further upon the relation between the terms *anhypostaton* and *enhypostaton*. Moreover, when Aquinas says that Christ's human nature exists only in the person of the Word and does not have a personality of its own, he translates the patristic idea that Christ's human nature is not *idihypostaton* (Gockel 2000:527).

In his work entitled *Loci Theologici* early seventeenth century theologian Johann Gerhard (1582 – 1637)<sup>123</sup> uses the terms ἀνυπόστατος and ἐνυπόστατος to explain the human nature of Christ and its relationship to the Logos (cf. Gockel 2000:528). Gerhard uses a two-fold (negative and positive) explanation of Ἀνυπόστατον in relationship to Christ's human nature:

Ἀνυπόστατον has a twofold meaning. Absolutely & simply, that is called ἀνυπόστατον which subsists neither in its own nor in another ὑπόστασις...but is purely negative. In this sense, the human nature of Christ cannot be said to be ἀνυπόστατον. Relatively & secondarily, that is called ἀνυπόστατον which does not in fact subsist in its

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. 120.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid. 52.

<sup>123</sup> Johann Gerhard, professor of theology at the academy to Jena, was a leading 17<sup>th</sup> century German Lutheran theologian and polemicist, and author of the standard Lutheran dogmatic treatise *Loci Theologici*.

own but in the ὑπόστασις of another; which indeed has essence yet not in its own personality and subsistence. In this sense, Christ's flesh is called ἀνυπόστατος, because it is ἐνυπόστατος, subsistent in the Λόγος himself (Gockel 2000:528).<sup>124</sup>

In this passage Gerhard argues that the human nature of Christ cannot be understood as ἀνυπόστατον in a purely negative sense, having no substance in itself or in another ὑπόστασις. Rather, Gerhard describes the humanity of Christ positively as ἀνυπόστατον, that is, it simply does not subsist on its own, but enjoys real subsistence in union with the divine Λόγος.

The focus of Gerhard's argument dismisses the notion that Christ's human nature existed before it was brought into union with the Logos by insisting that the anhypostasia of Christ's human nature must be understood in the order of its constitution (*ordo naturae*) rather than the order of its temporal state (*ordo temporis*). Gerhard uses the concept of in-subsistence to emphasize that there never was a time when the human nature of Christ subsisted outside the hypostatic union (Gockel 2000:528). We see therefore in Gerhard the concept of anhypostasis not in a negative sense to describe the human nature of Christ, but in a positive way to deny His existence prior to the incarnation. Moreover, we see the apparent influence of John of Damascus on Gerhard's thinking, given that in Gerhard's posthumous work entitled *Patrologia* he cites a fairly exhaustive list of John of Damascus' works published in Greek and Latin (Lang 1998:655-56).

The seventeenth century theologian Andreas Quenstedt (1617 – 1688)<sup>125</sup> follows Thomas Aquinas in explaining the Chalcedonian formula of one hypostasis in two unconfused natures. For Quenstedt the terms anhypostatos and enhypostatos illustrate two sides of the same coin. He explains that the Logos unites human nature with himself in his person, so that the proper hypostasis of the human nature and its place of subsistence is something higher, i.e., the divine; and so too out of the anhypostatos comes the enhypostatos (Gockel 2000:528-29).

<sup>124</sup> Matthias Gockel notes here that Gerhard distinguishes between an absolute and relative meaning of anhypostatos and enhypostatos, which was previously formulated by John of Damascus (cf. Lang, 'Anhypostatos-Enhypostatos', p. 649).

<sup>125</sup> Andreas Quenstedt is recognized by many historians as a leading and influential post reformation Lutheran theologian, whose work includes the *Theologia Didactio-Polemica Sive Systema Theologicum*, which was written to address and debate significant doctrinal issues of his day.

Quenstedt understands anhypostasis as '*carentia propriae subsistentiae*'. Quenstedt himself cites John of Damascus in his use of *anhypostatos* and *enhypostatos*, which Quenstedt describes as being somewhat ambiguous, and notes that the expression anhypostasis is used to describe things that simply do not exist. Enhypostasis on the other hand describes things which either exist *per se* or inhere in another thing such as an accident in a subject (cf. Lang 1998:656). Quenstedt, who in subscribing to the Damascene's view of Christ's human nature... takes Damascene's *Expositio fidei* III 9 as a *locus classicus* for the doctrine of the subsistence of Christ's human nature: 'ἐν τοῦ Λογοῦ ὑποστάσει, quae ἀμφοτέρων τῶν φύσεων ὑπόστασις' (1998:656).

David Hollaz (1648 – 1713)<sup>126</sup> understands Christ's human nature to be ἀνυποστασία because it subsists only in the hypostasis of the Logos. In this context Hollaz notes that if the human nature of Christ retained its own subsistence, this would result in the union of two persons, and thus two mediators, which is contrary to the teaching of I Timothy 2:5. For Hollaz, a person is one formally constituted in its being as an entirely complete and unified subsistence (Gockel 2000:529). Hollaz concludes that:

Therefore, one or the other nature of those which come together in one person, must be without its own subsistence; and since the *divine* nature, which is in fact the same as its subsistence, cannot be without it, it is evident that the absence of a proper subsistence (*carentia propriae subsistentiae*) must be attributed to the human nature (Gockel 2000:529).<sup>127</sup>

Hollaz continues by explaining:

...when it is considered strictly and according to itself, [Christ's human nature] does not possess its own actual subsistence (*propriam subsistentiam actu non habet*); but when it is considered in the union with the divine nature, it is rightly called ἐνυπόστατος, i.e., subsistent in the Logos (Gockel 2000:529).<sup>128</sup>

In the nineteenth century Lutheran theologian Heinrich Schmid (1811 – 1885) wrote *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (1875), which is a compilation of Lutheran dogma taken from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In it Schmid works with the

<sup>126</sup> David Hollaz is regarded by historians as the last of the so-called silver age of Lutheran orthodoxy, whose work entitled *Examen* was an important and influential Lutheran dogmatics.

<sup>127</sup> Gockel cites Hollaz in *Examen theologicum acroamaticum*, p.111.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. 658.

concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis to express the human nature of Christ, and affirms as a theological principle that the human nature of Christ exists as a real substance in union with his divine nature. Schmid states with respect to the divine and human natures of Christ that:

Each of these natures is to be regarded as truly genuine and entire.<sup>129</sup>

Schmid acknowledges the peculiar ontological relationship between Christ's human and divine natures, and uses the term ανυπστασια to explain that there is a significant difference between the mode of Christ's human nature and the human nature of other men. Schmid explains that:

It does, however, follow from the peculiar circumstances connected with the birth of Christ, and from the peculiar relation which the divine Λόγος sustains to this human nature, that certain peculiarities must be predicated of the human nature of Christ which distinguish it from that of other men. These are (1) the ανυπστασια [i.e., want of personality]...<sup>130</sup>

In explaining ανυπστασια relative to the human nature of Christ and the time of its subsistence, Schmid argues both negatively and positively that the human nature of Christ possesses no hypostasis outside its union with the divine nature:

The first results from the peculiar relation with the divine Λόγος entered into with the human nature; for this latter is not to be regarded as at any time subsisting by itself and constituting a person by itself, since the Λόγος did not assume a human person, but only a human nature. Therefore there is negatively predicated of the human nature the ανυπστασια, inasmuch as the human nature has no personality of its own; and there is positively predicated of it the ανυπστασια, inasmuch as this human nature has become possessed of another hypostasis, that of the divine nature.<sup>131</sup>

The fundamental point of emphasis is that Christ's human nature does not have personality in its subsistence (outside its union with the Logos) because His human nature is not a human person – *it is a human nature*. As an axiomatic point of orthodox ontology Schmid explains that in the union of divine and human natures the Logos imparts personality to the human nature of Christ:

This second Person of the Godhead, the Λόγος, in the act of uniting holds such a relation to the human nature that He, the Λόγος, imparts the personality, and is in general the

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<sup>129</sup> Cf. Schmid. *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Church*, p. 294.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. 294 – 295.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. 295.

efficient agent through which the union is accomplished; for it is He that sustains an active relation to the human nature, which He assumes, while the human nature stands in a passive relation to Him.<sup>132</sup>

While arguing that the divine and human natures of Christ are absolutely united in the Logos, Schmid in no way denies the individual and real subsistence of the human nature in this union. He cites Hollaz in affirming the integrity of both human and divine natures in their personal union and subsistence in the hypostasis of Christ, and concludes that:

The personal union is a conjunction of the two natures, divine and human, subsisting in one hypostasis of the Son of God, producing a mutual and an indissoluble communion of both natures.<sup>133</sup>

Schmid is deliberate in his use of term *ανυποστασια* to demonstrate that Christ's human nature cannot be understood as an individual person, and he cites Hollaz and his use of the term *ανυποστασια* to argue that the human nature of Christ enjoys real subsistence in union with the divine person. Because, if on the other hand, the human nature retained a particular subsistence, it would by definition be considered a second person. Schmid explains:

To the human nature of Christ there belong certain individual designations, by which, as by certain distinctive characteristics or prerogatives, He excels other men; such are (a) *ανυποστασια*, the being without a peculiar subsistence, since this is replaced by the divine person (*υποστασις*) of the Son of God, as one far more exalted. If the human nature of Christ had retained its peculiar subsistence, there would have been in Christ two persons, and therefore two mediators, contrary to I Tim. 2:5. The reason is, because a person is formally constituted in its being by a subsistence altogether complete, and therefore unity of person is to be determined from unity of subsistence. Therefore, one or the other nature, of those which unite in one person, must be without its own peculiar subsistence; and, since the divine nature, which is really the same as its subsistence, cannot really be without the same, it is evident that the absence of a peculiar subsistence must be ascribed to the human nature.<sup>134</sup>

Schmid also distinguishes between *ανυποστατον* and *ενυποστατον*, not as a dual formula, but to substantiate that Christ's human nature does not exist as a separate reality outside its union with the Logos. The term *ανυποστατον* is therefore not used to describe a negative characteristic of Christ's human nature. Neither Schmid nor scholastic Lutheran orthodoxy

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid. 295-296.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. 296.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. 300.

thought in these terms, unlike Barth. The material point was to ensure that the human nature of Christ did not exist outside its union with the Logos so as to construe another person in union with the Logos. Following this line of thinking Schmid cites Quenstedt who emphasizes that ἀνυποστατος, with respect to Christ's human nature, simply means that it does not exist in itself as a peculiar personality (hypostasis). Rather, the human nature of Christ is ἐνυποστατος because it exists as real substance by partaking in the hypostasis in the Logos.

That is ἀνυποστατον which does not subsist of itself and according to its peculiar personality; but that is ἐνυποστατον which subsists in another, and becomes the partaker of the hypostasis of another. When, therefore, the human nature of Christ is said to be ἀνυποστατος, nothing else is meant than that it does not subsist of itself, and according to itself, in a peculiar personality; moreover, it is called ἐνυποστατος, because it has become a partaker of the hypostasis of another, and subsists in the Λογος.<sup>135</sup>

Anticipating objections to the peculiar subsistence of Christ's human nature in union with the divine hypostasis, Schmid cites Hollaz who argues:

You say, 'If the human nature is without a peculiar subsistence, the same will be more imperfect than our nature, which is αὐθυποστατος, or subsisting of itself.' Reply: 'The perfection of an object is to be determined from its essence, and not from its subsistence.'<sup>136</sup>

Schmid cites Gerhard who emphasizes that Christ's human nature is not ἀνυποστατον in the sense of having no subsistence on its own; but rather, it is ἀνυποστατον relatively because it enjoys real subsistence in its union within the divine Logos:

Ανυποστατον has a twofold meaning. Absolutely, that is said to be ἀνυποστατον, which subsists neither in its own υποστασις, nor in that of another, which has neither essence nor subsistence, is neither in itself, nor in another, but is purely negative. In this sense, the human nature of Christ cannot be said to be ἀνυποστατον. Relatively, that is said to be ἀνυποστατον, which does not subsist in its own, but in the υποστασις of another, which indeed had essence, but not personality and subsistence peculiar to itself. In this sense, the flesh of Christ is said to be ἀνυποστατος, because it is ἐνυποστατος, subsisting in the Λογος.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid. 300.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 301.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. 301.



Schmid also cites Gerhard's argument that the ἀνυποστασία of Christ's human nature affirms the genesis of its existence and subsistence at the incarnation, and not before. Once again the point is made that ἀνυποστατος is not a term used to express what the human nature of Christ is in relation to its union with the Logos, but rather, what it is not.

The statement of some, that the starting-point of the incarnation is the ἀνυποστασία of the flesh intervening between that subsistence, on the one hand, by which the mass whereof the body of Christ was formed subsisted as a part of the Virgin, not by its own subsistence and that of the Virgin; and the subsistence, on the other hand whereby the human nature, formed from the sanctified mass by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the first moment of incarnation, began to subsist with the very subsistence of the Λογος, communicated to it, is not to be received in such a sense *as though the flesh of Christ was at any time entirely ἀνυποστατος*; but, because in our thought, such an ἀνυποστασία is regarded prior to its reception into the subsistence of the Λογος, not with regard to the order of time, but to that of nature. *The flesh and soul were not first united into one person; but formation of the flesh, by the Holy Ghost, from the separated and sanctified mass, the giving of a soul to this flesh as formed, the taking up of the formed and animated flesh into the subsistence of the Λογος, and the conception of the formed, animated, and subsisting flesh in the womb of the virgin, were simultaneous.*<sup>138</sup>

### 2.3.3 Reformed Interpretation and Development

Similar to the Lutherans, the Reformed scholastics also worked with the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ in union with the Logos. Reformed theologian Bartholomaeus Keckermann (1571 – 1609)<sup>139</sup> distinguishes between two concepts of substance (much like Johann Gerhard), and explains that while the human nature of Christ is not a distinct person, it is an individual, or, 'as the Logicians say', a primary substance (Gockel 2000:529-30). Keckermann explains:

But someone may say: 'Every substantial individual subsists by itself: if therefore Christ's human nature, considered by itself, is an individual, it therefore subsists by itself.' I answer: Subsisting by itself is sometimes opposed to that which subsists in something else, & so human nature always subsists by itself, because it is a substance and not an accident, which is characterized as existing in something else. But if subsisting by itself means the same as subsisting separately, outside the union & sustenance by the other, then it is false to say that the human nature subsists by itself, since it is sustained

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. 301.

<sup>139</sup> Bartholomaeus Keckermann was a Reformed Calvinist theologian and philosopher (University of Heidelberg) whose writings included works in systematic theology and rhetoric.



by the Logos, to which it is united in such a way that outside the Logos it could not have existence for a moment (Gockel 2000:529-30).<sup>140</sup>

We see in Keckermann's language (quite similar to Leontius of Byzantium) a failure to adequately distinguish between nature and hypostasis. Even so, he emphasizes that Christ's human nature is not an accident, but has real subsistence and contemporaneous existence in its union with the Logos (Gockel 2000:530).

Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588 – 1638)<sup>141</sup> explains 'that Christ's human nature never subsisted on its own, but was an instrument ἐνυπόστατος ἐν τῷ Λόγῳ', explaining that 'Christ is called similar to us regarding *physis*, not in regard to *hypostasis*, regarding essence, not in regard to subsistence' (Gockel 2000:530).<sup>142</sup>

Also, Heinrich Heidegger (1633 – 1698)<sup>143</sup> argues that because there is one mediator in Christ, there must also be one hypostasis that is Christ. And as such, because the human nature must subsist in the divine, it becomes ἐνυπόστατος through its subsistence in the Logos. Heidegger explains that:

...things are predicated of Christ the man, which belong God and vice versa, there must be certainly one hypostasis, one subsistent person. Either the divine nature subsists in the human nature or the human in the divine. That the divine nature should subsist in the human, and be sustained by it, is opposed to its infinite perfection. Therefore, the human is ἀνυπόστατος by itself (*per se*) and becomes ἐνυπόστατος in the Logos (Gockel 2000:531).<sup>144</sup>

In the nineteenth century Reformed theologian Heinrich Heppe (1820 – 1879) wrote the *Reformed Dogmatics* (1861) as a compilation of Reformed dogmatics in order to expound the orthodox system of Reformed faith. In the *Reformed Dogmatics* Heppe worked with the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis to express the human nature of Christ with respect to the union and individuality of the human nature of Christ within the divine Logos. Heppe explains that:

<sup>140</sup> Gockel cites Keckermann in *Systema SacroSanctae Theologiae, tribus libris adornatum* (Hannover, 1615), lib. III, c. II, 257.

<sup>141</sup> Johann Heinrich Alsted was a Reformed Calvinist theologian who is regarded as one of the most influential encyclopedists of all time. His theological works included polemics on Trinitarian and Christological doctrine.

<sup>142</sup> Gockel cites Alsted in *Theologia scholastica didactica*, 517.

<sup>143</sup> Heinrich Heidegger was a Swiss born Reformed dogmatician and ecclesiastical writer.

<sup>144</sup> Gockel cites Heidegger in *Corpus Theologiae Christianae*, 18.

In essentials all Reformed dogmaticians are agreed that the divinity of Christ is not really the divine nature (common to the three persons of the Trinity) but the person of the Logos, the Logos-determination of the Trinity, the deity thought of under the personal determination of the Logos; and that the humanity of Christ is the human nature common to all human personalities, thought of in abstraction (and so not personally) but individually.<sup>145</sup>

Heppe cites Amandus Polanus who explains that the substance of Christ's human nature is assumed by the eternal Word (the person, not the nature of Christ), in its union with the Logos as expressed in John 1:14:

When it is said that two natures, the divine and the human, have been personally united in Christ, the expression is figurative. It is not strictly the nature but the person or subsistence of the Word existing eternally in the form or nature of God, that has assumed the human nature and united it to itself. Exactly as Jn.1.14 does not say, the divine nature became flesh, but the Word became flesh.<sup>146</sup>

Heppe cites Heinrich Heidegger who argues that the human nature of Christ was not assumed into the divine nature, but into the person of the divine Logos:

This assumption took place not into the nature but into the person of the Son. Whence it was not deity but the Λόγος or sermo that is said to have become flesh, Jn.1.14 to be God manifested in the flesh.<sup>147</sup>

Heppe explains that the human nature of Christ subsists in union with the Logos while maintaining its own individuality (cf. Heppe 1861:416):

The humanity taken up into the personality of the Logos is, then, not a personal man but human nature without personal subsistence, yet thought of in its full spirit-body essentiality and individuality. This is why in the incarnation of the Logos it was not a new third thing that arose by the union of the divine and human natures. It was the human finite mode of being that was added to the eternal and infinite mode of being of the Logos, by the human nature being taken up into His personal subsistence. The Logos thus exists alike without and within the humanity of Christ. The Logos is still pre-existent, the Trinity is still complete. Christ's human nature had hypostatic subsistence only by its being taken up into the hypostasis of the Logos.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Cf. Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*. p. 414.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. 414.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid. 415.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. 416.

Heppe cites Francis Turretin who explains that the humanity of Christ exists as an individual of substance, noting the form of its essence as the determining factor of its individuality, not its personality:

Christ's human nature is of course a "prime intelligent substance perfect in the *esse* of its substance" (in scholastic terminology, an individual)... For the truth of the human nature is to be measured "by its matter, form and essential attributes, and not "by its personality".<sup>149</sup>

Heppe cites Keckermann's argument that Christ's human nature exists as 'an individuum distinct from the divine nature, though not a distinct person', and is sustained by its union within the divine Logos (1861:417). Heppe also cites Alsted who uses the term ἐνυπόστατον to explain that the substance of the human nature of Christ exists as an individuum in its subsistence in the divine Logos (1861:417):

"He assumed not a person but a nature, and it considered as an individuum. The reason for the former statement is that Christ's human nature never subsisted per se but has always been an instrument ἐνυπόστατον ἐν τῷ λόγῳ."<sup>150</sup>

Heppe also cites the Leiden Synopsis (1625), which refers to the ἀνυπόστατος of Christ's human nature to affirm that it came into existence at conception, and not to imply its lack of individuality in its union within the divine Logos:

The manner in which the only-begotten Son of God became flesh is by the direct union of the person of the Son of God with the human nature or the assumption of the human nature into one and the same person, Phil. 2.7; Heb. 2. 16 (...He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham); so that the Son of God, the second person of the sacrosanct Trinity, assumed into the unity of His person right from the moment of conception not a pre-existent person but one ἀνυπόστατος of its own hypostasis or devoid of subsistence, and make it belong to himself.<sup>151</sup>

### 2.3.4 Conclusion

In this section we examined the writings of Lutheran and Reformed scholastics, as well as Thomas Aquinas, with respect to their use and understanding of the concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis to express the human nature of Christ. We also considered the writings of post-

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. 416.

<sup>150</sup> Heppe cites Alsted.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*. p. 418.

scholastic theologians Heinrich Schmid (Lutheran) and Heinrich Heppe (Reformed) in view of their apparent influence on Barth in providing his first acquaintance with these terms.

The Lutheran scholastics, who were influenced by the writings of John of Damascus, understood the concept of anhypostasis to describe something that subsists neither in its own or another hypostasis, and was not a term used to describe the human nature of Christ negatively, but to describe the humanity of Christ positively as having its subsistence and genesis of existence in union with the hypostasis of the Logos. The terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis therefore are not used as contrasting concepts to describe the human nature of Christ, but to illustrate two sides of the same coin. Because the human nature is united into the person of the Logos, and therefore cannot be thought of as anhypostasis, it becomes enhypostasis in this union.

Anhypostatou is used simply to describe things that don't exist, and enhypostatou to describe things that exist per se or inhere in another thing. The human nature of Christ therefore subsists not as a separate person, but in the hypostasis of the Logos, having been united with the divine nature in the person of Christ.

Nineteenth century Lutheran theologian Heinrich Schmid consistently cites the Lutheran scholastics and uses the term ανυποστασια to argue both negatively and positively that Christ's human nature possesses no hypostasis outside its union with the divine nature. Because the Logos assumed a human nature (not a person), this human nature is ενποστασια, having become possessed by the hypostasis of the Logos. Christ's human nature is not ανυποστατον in the sense of having no subsistence of its own, but rather, is ανυποστατον relatively because it enjoys real subsistence in its union with the divine Logos.

Consistent with their Lutheran brethren, the Reformed scholastics distinguish between two concepts of substance and note that the human nature always subsists by itself because it is a substance and not an accident. Subsisting by itself individually in this sense, however, does not preclude the fact that it is sustained by its union in the Logos.

Nineteenth century Reformed theologian Heinrich Heppe agrees with and cites the Reformed scholastics in explaining that the human nature of Christ was not assumed into the divine nature, but into the person of the divine Logos. This assumption took place not into the nature but into

the person of the Son. The Logos therefore assumed not a person but a nature, which never subsisted *per se* but has always been an instrument ἐνυπόστατον in the divine Logos.

We therefore conclude that there was consensus agreement among Lutheran and Reformed writers (in the scholastic and post-scholastic periods) in their use and application of the concepts anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ. Furthermore, we understand that their use and application of these terms was consistent with that of the orthodox patristic Fathers.

Moreover, we see throughout these historical periods of orthodox Christological development that the concept of anhypostatton was not used in a negative sense to describe the existence of Christ's human nature, but simply as a way to assert that its substance exists not in itself, but in its subsistence in the divine Logos. Therefore, the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis are not used as a dual formula to describe the human nature of Christ, nor is it a valid doctrinal expression of orthodox writers.

This stands in contrast to Karl Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to explain the humanity of Christ in union with the divine Logos. Barth understands the anhypostasis to describe the negative aspect of Christ's human nature in union with the Logos (having no subsistence in itself), which differs with historical orthodoxy. Moreover, Barth's construction of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula is an innovation unique to Barth's Christological method, and as we will show, becomes the ontological foundation for his Christology as a whole.

## Chapter Three – Karl Barth’s Interpretive Construal of Anhypostasis *and* Enhypostasis

### 3.1 Introduction

Karl Barth’s interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis cannot simply be stated as a matter of theological course without first giving close consideration to the context from which he adopts these terms into his Christological method. That is, Barth appropriates anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as orthodox Christological terms, which he uses to express ontologically how the human nature of Christ comes into union with the divine Logos – *manifested in the person of Jesus Christ*. Barth’s adoption of these terms is a significant transition in his Christology,<sup>152</sup> which provide his ontological basis to express the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ in the texture of His humanity.<sup>153</sup>

In the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis Barth finds a fluid range of Christological motion to explain how the revelation of God is effected in the humanity of Christ both in its veiling and unveiling.<sup>154</sup> Once appropriated into his Christology, the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis form the ontological foundation by which Barth expresses the person of Jesus Christ as *very God* and *very man*,<sup>155</sup> which in turn allows him to express the incarnation as the eternal Son of God who takes to Himself a human nature without altering in any respect His divinity as the second person of the Trinity.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>152</sup> Bruce McCormack recognizes the significance of Barth’s ‘momentous discovery’ of the ‘anhypostatic-enhypostatic Christological dogma’. McCormack argues that Barth ‘saw in it an understanding of the incarnate being of the Mediator which preserved that infinite qualitative distinction between God and human kind which had been at the forefront of his concerns throughout the previous phase’ (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 327). As we shall see, this infinite qualitative distinction provided by the anhypostasis and enhypostasis is developed throughout the *Church Dogmatics* in Barth’s ontological development of Jesus Christ.

<sup>153</sup> Paul Dafydd Jones observes that ‘Barth found a way to stabilize and to render more precise his understanding of revelation – the idea that Christ’s human nature was anhypostatic and enhypostatic in his divine nature’ (cf. Paul Dafydd Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, p. 23).

<sup>154</sup> This affirmed that the divine and human are actually joined together in one person without compromising the distinction between God and humanity in that person (cf. Paul Dafydd Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, p. 23).

<sup>155</sup> Bruce McCormack understands that the significance of Barth’s adoption of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis model is that it enables the time-eternity dialectic to be built into the very structure of Barth’s Christology, while giving the incarnation its proper emphasis (cf. Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, pp. 327-28).

<sup>156</sup> Bruce McCormack clearly identified Barth’s dialectical understanding of the incarnation. Barth viewed the incarnation of Christ dialectically as the ‘unity of differentiation’, with the kenosis of the Son becoming a positive rather than negative act in the Logos assuming human nature to Himself: ‘What it meant was that, without surrendering anything proper to Himself as Divine, the Son took on a ‘human mode of existence’. The *kenosis* of the

Certainly Barth's ontology of the union of divine and human natures in Jesus Christ matures over the long course of his Christological development. Although anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis did not become a part of Barth's Christological language until the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, we see the groundwork for his adoption of these terms being laid in his dialectic of time-eternity and veiling-unveiling expressed in *Romans II*. In his book on *Romans*, the question that Barth struggled to answer was how the veiling and unveiling of the Triune God in the person of Jesus Christ, the one in whom time and eternity converge in the incarnate Son of God, can be expressed ontologically as such. In Göttingen, as Barth wrestled with this theological question he was introduced to anhypostasis and enhypostasis through the dogmatics works of Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe. It is here that these terms are first expressed by Barth in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* as the ontological grounding and framework used to explain how the Logos assumes to Himself human nature in the person of Jesus Christ. Thereafter, Barth more fully develops the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as a dual formula throughout the *Church Dogmatics*.

Our objective in this section is to examine Karl Barth's interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to explain how divinity and humanity are united ontologically in the person of Jesus Christ, and how this interpretation compares with historical protestant orthodoxy. We will do so by considering Barth's development of the human nature in union with the divine Christ given: (1) Barth's development of the human nature of Christ in *Romans II*, (2) the influence of Lutheran and Reformed Christology with respect to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, (3) Barth's introduction of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, and (4) Barth's mature development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Church Dogmatics*. We will also evaluate Barth's interpretation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis juxtaposed against the protestant orthodox interpretation of these terms as a way to determine the points of concurrence and variation.

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Son was thus understood by Barth to be a positive rather than a negative act; a *kenosis* by addition, not by subtraction... The union of the Logos with the human nature was understood by Barth to entail no divinization of the human. What is in view is a 'unity in differentiation', 'a strictly dialectical union', which in no way sets aside the qualitative distinction between divine and human nature' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 361).



## 3.2 Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis: Interpretative Development in Barth's Christology

### 3.2.1 The Humanity of God in *Romans II*

Notwithstanding the distinction that Karl Barth makes between the revelation of God as the 'Word became flesh' in the person of Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures which attest to that revelation,<sup>157</sup> Barth's Christology consistently rests upon and finds its impetus in his exegesis of the Word of God.<sup>158</sup> That being said, Barth develops his system of dogmatics recognizing the Holy Scriptures as its foundational component from which all theological musings must flow.<sup>159</sup> In his forward to Heinrich Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics*, Barth states:

That H. Scripture must be the controlling element in an evangelical dogmatics I also realized in the full.<sup>160</sup>

Barth's reliance on the Scriptures as the basis for His Christology<sup>161</sup> finds early and dramatic expression in *The Epistle to the Romans*, which he wrote, and then wrote again, while serving as a pastor in Safenwil.<sup>162</sup> Barth's book on *Romans* not only provides valuable insights into his early development of the humanity of Christ, but it also sets the stage for a more robust Christology, which Barth develops in his dogmatics works through his adoption of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ. In this section we will examine Barth's

<sup>157</sup> Karl Barth distinguishes between the revelation of God realized in the person of Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures which attest to that revelation. Barth considers the Scriptures to be the word of men who yearned for Immanuel, and who saw, heard, and handled it in Jesus Christ. The Scriptures therefore declares, attests, and proclaims this revelation of God manifested in Jesus Christ (cf. *CD I/1*, p. 108). The Scriptures become the Word of God to the extent that God causes it to be His Word, to the extent that He speaks through it (cf. *CD I/1*, p. 109).

<sup>158</sup> Despite his qualified view of Holy Scripture, Barth's *Church Dogmatics* is replete with his expositional treatment of Scripture as the foundation and authority by which he holds his Dogmatics accountable.

<sup>159</sup> Richard E. Burnett attributes Barth's willingness to continue his biblical exegesis amidst the 'torrent' of criticism he received after *Romans I* and *II* to the importance that Barth understood exegesis to be. Burnett argues that throughout Barth's theological career he claimed that biblical exegesis remained the presupposition and goal of all his work (cf. Richard E. Burnett, *Karl Barth's Theological Exegesis*, p. 23).

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Karl Barth's Forward, p. v.

<sup>161</sup> Geoffrey Bromiley makes an important observation with respect to Barth's biblical exegesis where Barth's exegesis and understanding of the Bible was a dominant emphasis. Bromiley argues that Barth opened the door to theological exegesis and biblical theology. 'He focused on the inner subject matter of Scripture rather than on the external circumstances. He did this, not by repudiating the historical question, but by redefining it' (cf. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 'The Karl Barth Experience' in *How Karl Barth Changed My Mind*, p. 65).

<sup>162</sup> Barth served as pastor in the parish of Safenwil from 1911 – 1921, where his turn to the Scriptures became engrained into his theological thinking. Eberhard Busch explains in Barth's deep engagement with Paul's Epistle to the Romans that, 'It was the discovery of the Bible which held his attention. He had now 'gradually become aware of the Bible'. And so he expected that the new basis for which he was searching would come from a new attempt to be 'more open towards the Bible and to allow it to tell me what it might have to do with Christianity more directly than before' (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth – His life from letters and autobiographical texts*, p. 98).



development of the humanity of Christ in *Romans* II, which demonstrates his early ontological grounding of the relationship between divine and human natures in the eternal Logos.

It was not until late October of 1920 that Barth decided to rewrite his first version of *Romans*.<sup>163</sup> Amazingly, Barth wrote his second version during the eleven month period between the autumn of 1920 and the summer of 1921 while still serving as pastor in his parish in Safenwil. This revision, coming hard on the heels of his first edition of *Romans* published in 1919, was not a simple revision, but a complete re-write of his first edition – *page by page*. In Barth's own estimation of his second version he says that 'even now there will be all kinds of oversights and dislocations, but I think that I am a *bit* nearer to the truth of the matter than before'.<sup>164</sup>

We also observe in *Romans* II an important motivation with respect to Barth's theological method that he attributes primarily to his greater study of *Paul's Epistle to the Romans*.<sup>165</sup> Barth explains that the impetus for his revision of *Romans* to be:

First and most important: the continued study of Paul himself. My manner of working has enabled me to deal only with portions of the rest of the Pauline literature, but each fresh piece of work has brought with it new light upon the Epistle to the Romans.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Evidently, it was after a visit from his friend Friedrich Gogarten that Barth decided to re-write his first commentary on *Romans*. 'And now a strange and decisive bit of news: when Gogarten, with whom I had so many good conversations by day and night, was gone, suddenly the *Letter to the Romans* began to shed its skin; that is, I received the enlightenment that, as it now stands, it is simply impossible that it should be reprinted; rather it must be reformed root and branch' (cf. *Revolutionary Theology in the Making: Barth-Thurneysen Correspondence, 1914-1925*, p. 53).

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth – His life from letters and autobiographical texts*, p. 118.

<sup>165</sup> With respect to Barth's hermeneutical approach to his book on *Romans*, Bruce McCormack identifies what he describes as a 'revolution in biblical hermeneutics'. 'The revolution consisted in this: Barth was seeking to show the limits of historical-critical study of the Bible in the interests of a more nearly theological exegesis. He was not at all interested in setting historical-critical study aside, as some of his early critics thought. In fact, he was quite convinced that historical criticism could itself play a role in establishing its own limitations.' McCormack goes on to say that Barth was not unwilling to acknowledge that he approached 'the task of exegesis with certain dogmatic assumptions'. Nevertheless, while Barth acknowledges the value of historical criticism in understanding the text by means of philological and archeological investigation, to establish a historical sense of the text is not the same as understanding the meaning of the text. 'It is at this point that the nature of Barth's hermeneutical revolution emerges clearly' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Biblical Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective*, 'Historical Criticism and Dogmatic Interest in Karl Barth's Theological Exegesis of the New Testament', pp. 322-326).

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression. Preface to the Second Edition p. 3. John Webster argues that despite wide and continual speculation over Barth's motivation for writing his *Romans*, Barth simply wanted to write a commentary on *Romans*. Webster further argues that 'Even though we may judge that on occasions Barth did not achieve the right sort of subservience of his text to the biblical text, the intention of his method is beyond doubt (cf. John Webster, 'Karl Barth', in *Reading Romans Through the Centuries*, pp. 205, 221).

*Romans II* not only marks a pivotal movement in Barth's theology, but it also provides a sharpened view into his maturing development of the humanity of Christ, and provides the Christological grounding that we first see demonstrated in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, and then more fully developed throughout the *Church Dogmatics*.<sup>167</sup>

In *Romans II* Jesus Christ is the *paradoxical* revelation of God in this world, in whose being manifests both the humiliation of a sinner in Jesus, and the exaltation of Christ as the light of the last things. Barth sees in the person of Jesus Christ the convergence of: humiliation and exaltation, veiling and unveiling, time and eternity, and God and humanity. And yet, the conflicting realities of time and eternity find absolute unity in Jesus Christ, who manifests in His person the faithfulness of God in His righteousness, in whose advent is realized the second and final Adam, and in whom the Word becomes flesh in the form of a servant.<sup>168</sup>

Barth understands that the faithfulness of God, witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, is revealed in both the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ.<sup>169</sup> The reality of Jesus as *very man* is evidenced in His being made a sinner like those with whom He dwells in a sin-drenched earth, as Jesus gives Himself to the judgment of God on behalf of His people. We witness here Barth's emphasis on the cross and death of Jesus that mark His life. As God's servant, He sacrifices Himself; His life becomes one of *negation* as He gives up every legitimate claim to personal achievement. Yet, even in His humiliation, as Jesus Christ, God exalts Him as the light

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<sup>167</sup> Bruce McCormack suggests that 'the gains made in *Romans II* are everywhere presupposed throughout the *Church Dogmatics*; that the continuity in theological perspective between these two great works so greatly outweighs the discontinuity that those who wish to read the dogmatics without the benefit of the lens provided by *Romans II* will understand everything in the wrong light' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, pp. 244-45). Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt further notes that in Barth's two *Romans* is found not only the exposition of Scripture in general, but also the 'real prolegomena of the *Church Dogmatics*' where the concept of God is explained in preliminary form (cf. Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, 'The Idol Totters', *Theological Audacities*, p. 176). This understanding of *Romans* certainly applies to Barth's ontological development of Christ's human nature.

<sup>168</sup> Herein presents a brief compendium of Barth's development of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ taken from his exegesis of *Romans* Chapters 3, 5, and 8, in whose being the dialectic of time and eternity, and veiling and unveiling converge and find personal unity. We note already in this language Barth's sharpened sense of union between divine and human natures in Christ.

<sup>169</sup> Barth lays the groundwork here for the ontological scheme of Jesus of Nazareth (more fully developed in the *Church Dogmatics*), in whose person manifests the righteousness of God in His humiliation and exaltation. 'The faithfulness of God is the divine patience according to which He provides, as sundry times and at many divers points in human history, occasions and possibilities and witnesses of the knowledge of His righteousness. Jesus of Nazareth is the point at which it can be seen that all the other points form one line of supreme significance... The faithfulness of God and Jesus the Christ confirm one another' (cf. Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 96).

of the last things. As the servant of God, the humiliation of Christ becomes His exaltation (cf. *The Epistle to the Romans* 1933:96-97).

Jesus stands among sinners as a sinner; He sets Himself wholly under the judgment under which the world is set; He takes His place where God can be present only in questioning about Him; He takes the form of a slave; He moves to the cross and death; His greatest achievement is a negative achievement. He is not a genius, endowed with manifest or even occult powers; He is not a hero or leader of men. He is neither poet nor thinker: - *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Nevertheless, precisely in this negation, He is the fulfillment of every possibility of human progress, as the Prophets and the Law conceive of progress and evolution, because He sacrifices to the incomparably greater and to the invisibly Other every claim to genius and every human heroic or aesthetic or physis possibility, because there is no conceivable human possibility of which He did not rid Himself. Herein He is recognized as the Christ; for this reason God hath exalted Him; and consequently He is the light of the last things by which all men and all things are illuminated. In Him we behold the faithfulness of God in the depths of Hell. The Messiah is the end of mankind, and here also God is found faithful. On the day when mankind is dissolved the new era of the righteousness of God will be inaugurated.<sup>170</sup>

The paradoxical revelation of God's faithfulness in Jesus Christ, however, is not revealed as a self-evident truth in this world. The revelation of God is by definition a paradox because it is not naturally discerned (of the world), but supernaturally revealed (by the Spirit of God) through faith. The divine nature of Christ is a secrecy clothed in the flesh of Jesus, which can only be truly revealed to any human being by the exercise of faith in the faithfulness of God. In Jesus Christ is made manifest the active movement of God's revelation to the world, but revelation dictated by His own terms. This revelation, however, is not a revelation, unless it is manifested by the grace of God in the event of His supernatural intersection with the natural realm of this world.

In Jesus revelation is a paradox, however objective and universal it may be. That the promises of the faithfulness of God have been fulfilled in Jesus the Christ is not, and never will be, a self-evident truth, since in Him it appears in its final hiddenness and its most profound secrecy. The truth, in fact, can never be self-evident, because it is a matter neither of historical nor of psychological experience, and because it is neither a cosmic happening within the natural order, nor even the most supreme event of our imaginings.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth's exegesis of 3:22, p. 97.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. pp. 97-98.

The dialectic of veiling and unveiling emerges quite forcibly in the paradoxical revelation of the righteousness God in Jesus, who in His flesh veils the incomprehensibility of eternal God from those who would seek Him in out of religious pretense. This marks the absolute necessity for the revelation of faith, demonstrated by the mercy of God in the flesh of Jesus, in whose advent manifests the supernatural intercourse of eternity with time. This time-eternity dialectic can only be described as a miracle – *vertical from above*.

The revelation which is in Jesus, because it is the revelation of the righteousness of God, must be the most complete veiling of His incomprehensibility. In Jesus, God becomes veritably a secret: He is made known as the Unknown, speaking in eternal silence; He protects himself from every intimate companionship and from all the impertinence of religion.<sup>172</sup>

‘Our’ righteousness can be genuine and permanent only as the Righteousness of God. By *new* must always be understood the eternal world in the reflection of which we stand here and now. The mercy of God which is directed towards us can be true, and remain true, only as a miracle – ‘vertical from above’.<sup>173</sup>

The dialectic of veiling and unveiling finds its fullest expression in the flesh of Jesus. He is not only a historical possibility, but He is THE possibility of the revelation of eternal God in the history of time and space. Jesus lived as real humanity in history, and as a man, Jesus of Nazareth is humanity, but not just humanity. He is the man in whom time and eternity converge in the revelation of God in the flesh. In the time-eternity dialectic He is THE man who is filled with the voice of God.<sup>174</sup>

Jesus of Nazareth, Christ after the flesh, is one amongst other possibilities of history; but He is THE possibility which possesses all the marks of impossibility. His life is a history within the framework of history, a concrete event in the midst of other concrete events, an occasion in time and limited by the boundaries of time; it belongs to the texture of human life. But it is history pregnant with meaning; it is concreteness which displays the Beginning and the Ending; it is time awakened to the memory of Eternity; it is humanity filled with the Voice of God.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid. p. 98.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth’s exegesis of 3:22b-24, p.102.

<sup>174</sup> Bruce McCormack argues that the fundamental problem that Barth addresses throughout the phase of *Romans II* is: ‘how can God make Himself known to human beings without ceasing—at any point in the process of Self-communication—to be the *Subject* of revelation’ (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectically Theology*, p. 207)?

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth’s exegesis of 3:22b-24 p. 103-104.

As THE possibility of humanity, Jesus is the man who died and was resurrected from that death by God the Father. This forms the impetus of new humanity being born from above – the dialectic of God and humanity manifested in Jesus Christ – wrought by the revelation of faith. This dialectic of God and humanity reveals the movement of God to humanity in the man Jesus Christ.

Under the banner of the death and resurrection of Christ (iv. 25) – by the knowledge of God, who gives life to the dead and calls them that are not as though they were (iv. 17) – the new man comes into being, and I am born – from above (John iii. 3). If there be no gamble of faith, if faith be forgotten or for one moment suspended, or if it be thought of as anything but a hazard, this identity is no more than an entirely trivial enterprise of religious or speculative arrogance. Speaking dialectically: this identification must always be shattered by the recognition that man is not God.<sup>176</sup>

As humanity, the life of Jesus Christ is marked by His death. It is His death in fact that becomes the priority of His life, and testifies to His reality as humanity. Barth emphasizes that the Scripture bears witness to the life of Jesus through His death. His death illumines His life.

The doctrine of the *munus triplex*<sup>177</sup> obscures and weakens the New Testament concentration upon the death of Christ; for there is not second or third or any other aspect of His life which may be treated independently or set side by side with His death.<sup>178</sup>

Everything shines in the light of His death, and is illuminated by it. No single passage in the Synoptic Gospels is intelligible apart from the death.<sup>179</sup>

Therefore, as true humanity, Jesus stands in juxtaposition with Adam, but always as a contrast to Adam, not as a counter-balancing existence. Like Adam, Jesus dies as the result of sin. But unlike Adam, Jesus is resurrected from his death as the second and last Adam; the One who has overcome the death wrought by the first Adam. And yet, while the death of Jesus presupposes His being as humanity; it is in His resurrection that the Father declares Him to be the Son of God as well.

Christ is contrasted with Adam as the goal and purpose of the movement. Hence between them there can be no equipoise. As the goal, Christ does not merely expose a distinction.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth's exegesis of 5:5, p. 149.

<sup>177</sup> The Reformed doctrine of the *Munus Triplex* teaches that Jesus Christ holds the Old Testament offices of Prophet, Priest, and King and fulfills them in His life and work.

<sup>178</sup> Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth's exegesis of 5:6, p. 159.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. p. 159.

He forces a de-cision between the two factors. By doing this, He is not merely the second, but the *last* Adam (I Cor. Xv. 45).<sup>180</sup>

Even the Christ according to the flesh must die in order that He may be appointed the Son of God (i. 3.4).<sup>181</sup>

Barth expresses the time-eternity dialectic manifested in Jesus Christ as very man; but very man as the Son of God. Although He was born of the seed of David in the flesh, Jesus is also non-concrete, unobservable, and non-historical. Flesh and blood alone cannot reveal to us what God alone reveals out the secret counsel of His eternal will, through the power of the resurrection in the man Jesus Christ:

But Christ is the 'new' subject, the EGO of the coming world. This EGO receives and bears and reveals the divine *justification* and election – *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. This qualification of man, this appointing as the Son of God, through the power of the resurrection (i.3.4), of Him who was born of the seed of David, is also non-concrete, unobservable, and non-historical. Flesh and blood cannot reveal it unto us. Here also hath our knowledge and the object of our knowledge proceed from the secret of divine predestination, by which all human history is constituted anew and given a pre-eminent and victorious meaning.<sup>182</sup>

Once again, dialectically speaking, Barth draws time and eternity together in Jesus, the Christ; as the One who stands at these cross-roads as *very God* and *very man*. In this way the eternal glory of God invades the realm of this world, which by its sinfulness has separated itself from a Holy God. This separation, however, is bridged by God who sends His own Son into this world of regression and estrangement. In this way, *very God* and *very man* is revealed as the Word became flesh.

To this, Jesus, the Christ, the eternal Christ, bears witness. At these cross-roads, then, God's own Son stands, and He stands nowhere else. God SENDS HIM – from the realm of the eternal, unfallen, unknown world of the Beginning and the End. Therefore, He is 'born of the Virgin Mary' – that is, He is our protest against assigning eternity to any Humanity or Nature or History which we can observe. Therefore, He is 'very God and very Man' – that is, He is the document by which the original, lost-but-recoverable union of God and man is guaranteed. God sends Him – into this temporal, fallen world with which we are only too familiar; into this order which we can finally interpret only in biological categories, and which we call 'Nature'; into this order which we can finally

<sup>180</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth's exegesis of 5:12, p. 166.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. p. 167.

<sup>182</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth's exegesis of 5:18-19, pp. 181-82.



interpret only from the point of view of economic materialism, and which we call 'History'; in fact, into this humanity and into this flesh. Yes – the Word became flesh, became as we shall hear later, - sin controlled flesh.<sup>183</sup>

Barth further expresses the *very God* and *very man* motif in the *kenosis* of the eternal Christ, the Son of God, who took the form of a servant. Jesus appears on the scene as the Son of God incognito. He has humbled Himself and surrendered all of Himself as the servant of God. He cannot be recognized in His true identity except as He is revealed by the eternal Father, which reaches beyond any mortal comprehension.

In order that the condemnation might be perfected, this KENOSIS of the Son of God, this *form of a servant*, this impenetrable incognito, is not accidental but essential. It is imperative that the incognito of the Son of God should increase and gain the upper hand, that it should move on to final self-surrender and self-abandonment; imperative that we, from the human point of view, should be scandalized; imperative that we should recognize that not flesh and blood but only the Father which is in heaven can reveal that there is more to be found here than flesh and blood.<sup>184</sup>

To sum up, in *Romans* II the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is a paradox, which Barth expresses as both the dialectic of time-eternity and veiling-unveiling. As the revelation of God, Jesus is clothed in secrecy as that which cannot be revealed by the flesh, but only through the supernatural revelation of faith. The revelation of God, not being realized as a 'natural' revelation in Jesus, becomes a veiling of His being. This in no way, however, negates the true humanity of Jesus who lived in history as THE true revelation of eternal God in time and space. In Jesus humanity is filled with the voice of God. Dialectically speaking, Jesus stands at the crossroads as *very God* and *very man* who is revealed supernaturally as the Word became flesh, who even in the *kenosis* is exalted as the Son of God.

Herewith Barth sets the stage for a more precise ontology that explains dialectically how the human nature of Christ can both veil and unveil the revelation of God in this world. The essence of the person of Jesus Christ that so uniquely and paradoxically unites the eternal with the time and space of this world will find more tangible expression in Barth's adoption of the *anhypostasis and enhypostasis*.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Sixth Impression, Barth's exegesis of 8:3 p. 277.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. p. 281.

### 3.2.2 Lutheran and Reformed Influence

In the early part of 1921, while still working to complete his second edition of *Romans*, Karl Barth received an invitation to become Honorary Professorship of Reformed Theology at Göttingen University.<sup>185</sup> In a letter dated January 29, 1921, Johann Adam Heilmann, who had been pastor of the Reformed congregation in Göttingen from 1891 to 1920, wrote to Karl Barth in Safenwil:

For years I have been striving to establish a Reformed professorate in Göttingen. The Reformed Church had five universities and academies at the beginning of the nineteenth century. All of them were taken away from it, and the result is that its scholarly work has remained underdeveloped to an extent that we should be ashamed of. There is insufficient education of the ministers of the Reformed Church, a confusion, in many cases a deadening effect on the Reformed congregations, and great damage to the entire Protestant Church. I do not want to recreate something old and past, nor even less conjure up any confessional narrowness, but what I would like is that the charismata that the Lord has given to the Reformed branch of the church should not remain unused, forgotten, and scorned. Reformed Protestantism has a calling and should fulfill it to the blessing of German Christianity.<sup>186</sup>

Such was the genesis of Barth's invitation to become the honorary Professor of Reformed Dogmatics at Göttingen. And it was in Göttingen, as Barth prepared for his lectures on dogmatics that he first encountered the dogma of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis that would so profoundly impact his Christology.<sup>187</sup> As we have shown, evidenced by his development of Christ's human nature in *Romans* II, the dialectic of veiling and unveiling that so forcibly emerges in Barth's Christology can now lay claim ontologically to a historical / theological framework, which can be more precisely (and flexibly) expressed through his adoption of these terms.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> The Chair of Reformed Theology at Göttingen was founded with the help of American Presbyterians, and was awarded to Barth (as he understood it) based upon his first edition of *Romans* and his passionate concern with the Bible (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth, His life from letters and autobiographical texts*, p. 123).

<sup>186</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Theology of the Reformed Confessions*, Preface, vii.

<sup>187</sup> Bruce McCormack notes that, 'Barth's discovery of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis came in the form of the Post Reformation text books of the Lutheran, Heinrich Schmid and the Reformed, Heinrich Heppe while Barth was first developing his dogmatics lectures in Göttingen. McCormack also notes that by the second semester Heppe and Schmid became his 'constant companions', with Heppe becoming his foundational text' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 337).

<sup>188</sup> In identifying the Christological breakthrough of Barth's discovery of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis, Bruce McCormack notes that, 'The proximity to Barth's dialectic of veiling and unveiling was obvious. In that God takes to God's self a human nature, God veils God's self in a creaturely medium...God can only be known in Jesus where



As he set about to write his first dogmatics lectures in Göttingen, Barth describes his encounter with Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe specific to their approach to dogmatics, which gives the Scriptures a healthy priority in understanding the revelation of God.

Then it was that, along with the parallel Lutheran work of H. Schmid, Heppe's volume just recently published fell into my hands... I read, I studied, I reflected; and found that I was rewarded with the discovery, that here at last I was in the atmosphere in which the road by way of the Reformers to H. Scripture was a more sensible and natural one to tread, than the atmosphere, now only too familiar to me, of the theological literature determined by Schleiermacher and Ritschl. I found a dogmatics which had form and substance, oriented upon the central indications of the Biblical evidences for revelation, which it also managed to follow out in detail with astonishing richness – a dogmatics which by adopting and sticking to main lines of the Reformation attempted alike a worthy continuation of the doctrinal constructions of the older Church, and yet was also out to cherish and preserve continuity with the ecclesiastical science of the Middle Ages.<sup>189</sup>

The significance of both these works lay in their historical compilations of Lutheran and Reformed theology, which included their expression of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain the ontology of Christ's human nature. This marks the place where Barth first breathed in deeply the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a legitimate dogma to explain how the human nature of Christ came into union with the divine Logos. That being said, our objective in this section is to examine the Lutheran and Reformed dogma of anhypostasis and enhypostasis and their influence on Barth's own adoption of these terms as presented in the dogmatics works of Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe. We will also examine Barth's departure from both the Lutheran and Reformed understanding of anhypostasis and enhypostasis in his unique interpretation of these terms as a dual formula.

### Heinrich Heppe – Reformed Theology and the Anhypostasis / Enhypostasis

Heinrich Heppe was born in March 1820 in Kassel, Germany, the son of a soldier and court musician of the Hessian government. Given the influence of his mother and grandmother, the

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He condescends to grant faith to the would-be human knower; where He unveils Himself in and through the veil of human flesh' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 327).

<sup>189</sup> Barth qualifies his acceptance of Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics* with respect to the doctrine of Scripture, especially the mystery of revelation (Cf. Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Karl Barth's Forward, p. v.).

young Heppe enrolled at the Kassel Gymnasium at Marburg University to study theology.<sup>190</sup> Heppe completed his theological studies at Marburg in 1843, and was awarded the degree of doctor of philosophy in 1844. After holding a pastorate in Kassel from 1845 through 1849, Heppe was appointed Privatdozent at Marburg in 1849, where at age 32 (in 1852) he became the youngest person in Germany to hold the doctor of theology degree. In addition to his rapid rise to a teaching position, from 1844 to until the end of his life in 1879, Heppe's publications were significant in both quality and quantity.<sup>191</sup> Heppe's classic textbook on Reformed dogmatics was published in 1861. He states in the foreword to the first edition that his aim was to expound the orthodox system of the doctrine of the Reformed Church faithfully and without addition.

All the written sources I could lay hands on, I have carefully researched and compared, in order to transmit the thought material brought to light and disseminated by the acknowledge representatives of Reformed orthodoxy. Where differences were found, I have given an account of them and have at the same time attempted to set forth, which view is to be regarded as that truly corresponding to the spirit of Reformed Church doctrine.<sup>192</sup>

In view of the fact that Barth's first acquaintance with the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis came through Heppe's Reformed Dogmatics, the question before us is did Heppe's appropriation of these concepts in explaining the Reformed doctrine in some way construe a dual formulation that Barth appropriated into his own Christology?

In the *Reformed Dogmatics* (1861) Heinrich Heppe takes up the subject of the incarnation in the context of Jesus Christ as the Mediator of the covenant of grace. As such, Heppe is clear to present the incarnation of the Logos as the 'Word became flesh', not to be understood as though it turned into flesh or was confusedly mixed with flesh; but as 'He who was the Son of God became the Son of Man: not by confusion or essence but by the unity of the person' (*Reformed Dogmatics*:414).

Moreover, the humanity of Christ taken up into the personality of the Logos is not a separate man, but human nature without personal subsistence (i.e. without individual personhood). The

<sup>190</sup> It is Heppe's able editing of Reformed scholastic dogmatics works for which he is known today (cf. Lowell H. Zuck, 'Heinrich Heppe: Melancthonian Liberal in the Nineteenth-Century German Reformed Church', *Church History*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Dec., 1982), p. 419).

<sup>191</sup> Zuck cites his own unpublished chronological bibliography of Heppe, which includes 92 items, many of which are multi-volume works (cf. Lowell Zuck, *Heinrich Heppe*, p. 421).

<sup>192</sup> Cf. Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Preface, vi.

Logos therefore assumes a human nature, not a person, into its personal subsistence. In this way the Logos, the eternal mode of being, takes into His personal subsistence a finite mode of being. This finite being (human nature), however, is thought of as existing in essentiality and individuality within its union with the Logos (*Reformed Dogmatics*:414).

Heppe's emphasis lays in that fact that Christ's humanity is an *individuum*, an exposition of human nature in individual form. 'It has real existence only in the person of the Logos, not itself.' In actuality Heppe's specific reference to the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis is rather sparse in the *Reformed Dogmatics*. He cites Alsted that the Logos assumed not a person but a nature, which subsisted ἐνυπόστατον ἐν τῷ λόγῳ. Whereas, in the context of the Leiden Synopsis Heppe states that the second person of the Trinity assumed at the moment of conception not a pre-existent person, but one ἀνυπόστατος of its own hypostasis, or devoid of substance (*Reformed Dogmatics*:416-17).

Despite the paucity of Heppe's use of the terms ἀνυπόστατος and ἐνυπόστατον in the *Reformed Dogmatics*, he is clear to explain that the human nature of Christ exists in personal subsistence in the Logos, which can be defined as ἐνυπόστατον. However, the human nature assumed by the Logos was devoid of subsistence prior to the incarnation; it is ἀνυπόστατος. We understand therefore that Heppe expresses ἀνυπόστατος and ἐνυπόστατον as autonomous terms to explain how the human nature of Christ exists in union with the Logos.

#### Heinrich Schmid – Lutheran Theology and the Anhypostasis / Enhypostasis

Heinrich Schmid (1811- 1886) was a Doctor and Professor of Theology at the University of Erlangen whose work entitled *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (1875) is considered a classical compendium of Lutheran dogmatics. Schmid draws upon the writings of prominent Lutheran theologians who lived during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which Schmid employs to support and clarify the Christian faith as developed in the early Lutheran tradition.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> As a compiler of Lutheran theology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Heinrich Schmid's work takes on a historical character rather than a final or resolute definition of Lutheran theology (Cf. Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Preface to the Reprint Edition, p. 3).

In Schmid's work he uses the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis to explain how the Logos comes into union of the human nature of Christ, and cites a number of Lutheran scholastics to support his use of these terms specific to the ontology of Christ's human nature. Anhypostasis and enhypostasis prove to be particularly helpful in Lutheran dogma, which emphasizes that the human nature of Christ has no existence prior to its union with the Logos. While Schmid acknowledges the peculiar ontological relationship between Christ's divine and human nature, he also affirms that Christ's human nature enjoys real subsistence (in itself) in its union with the Logos.

Lutheran dogma states that Christ's humanity has no existence prior to the incarnation, which is one of the key features of the humanity of Jesus that distinguishes Him from other human beings. This is the driving principle of Schmid's use of ανυπστασια, which he employs to explain how the human nature of Christ is sustained by the person of the Logos, rather than in its own capacity. In other words, the human nature of Christ does not exist as a separate person in its own being, but derives that personhood in union with the Logos. This is the strict context in which Schmid refers to Christ's human nature in a negative sense as ανυπστασια. That is; the negative aspect of ανυπστασια is applied to the human nature of Christ prior to the incarnation, not subsequent to it, having been assumed by the Logos in their union. To emphasize this point Schmid makes the counter argument that the ανυπστασια can also be understood *positively* because the human nature of Christ has become possessed by the hypostasis of the Logos. The Logos imparts personality to the human nature of Christ in their union, and actively sustains this union as an indissoluble communion of divine and human nature subsisting in one hypostasis of the Son of God.<sup>194</sup>

Schmid also notes that the human nature of Christ existing as ανυπστασια (i.e. without individual personhood), does not negate individual essence in the human nature's being, but simply precludes any notion that Jesus Christ exists as two persons in the Logos. In this way, in its peculiar union with the divine Logos, the human nature of Christ excels other human beings. We note here also the emphasis of the union between divine and human natures in the Logos, which so richly characterizes Lutheran Christological dogma.

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<sup>194</sup> Herein are presented the significant arguments made by Heinrich Schmid with respect to the anhypostasis and enhypostasis of Christ's human nature, which we made reference to in Chapter 2.

## Karl Barth's Reception of Lutheran and Reformed Interpretation of Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis

It is interesting to note that Barth approaches the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis given the backdrop of Lutheran and Reformed doctrine with respect to the human nature of Christ in its union with the Logos. In this way Barth uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dialectic in the *Church Dogmatics* as he considers the theological / historical origin of these terms within the context of Lutheran and Reformed Christology. We therefore see the clear influence of Lutheran and Reformed perspectives of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis expressed in Karl Barth's adoption of these terms as he was introduced to them by Schmid and Heppe. Barth cites Hollaz in his use of the term anhypostasis (or impersonalitas) to describe the human nature of Christ having no personality in his own being.

Hollaz defines the term as follows (ex. Theol. Acroam., 1707, III, I, 3, qu. 12): *carentia propriae subsistentiae, divina Filii Dei hypostasi tanquam longe eminentiori compensata*. By ὑποστασις, *persona*, was meant the independent existence (the *propria subsistentia*) of His humanity. Its ὑποστασις is, *longe eminentior*, that of the Logos, no other. Jesus Christ exists as a man because as this One exists, because as He makes human essence His own, adopting and exalting it into unity with Himself. As a man, therefore, He exists directly in and with the one God in the mode of existence of His eternal Son and Logos – not otherwise or apart from this mode.<sup>195</sup>

We note here Barth's emphasis on the Logos, who assumes human essence to Himself; and in so doing makes human essence His own. The man Jesus therefore only exists in the mode of existence as the eternal Son and Logos. Barth cites Polanus and Heidegger (via Heppe) emphasizing the human nature, being elected, but not existing autonomously.

He certainly does not exist only *εν ιδεα*, but *εν ατομω*, *in uno certo individuo* (Polanus, Synt. Theol. Chr., 1609, VI, 15, col. 2406), in the one form of human nature and being elected and prepared and actualised by God, yet not autonomously, as would be the case if that with which God unites Himself were a *homo* and not *humanitas*. With a more emphatic regard for this anhypostasis of the human nature of Jesus Christ, H. Heidegger (Corp. Theol. Chr., 1700, XVII, 36, quoted from Heppe, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, p. 325) defined the incarnation as the *assumptio*...<sup>196</sup>

<sup>195</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 49. We take notice here that Barth cites Hollaz and his understanding of the impersonalitas of Christ's human nature to complement Barth's own argument for the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 49.

Barth argues that this theologoumenon, which purports that Christ's human nature, has no true independent existence like us (being indirectly maintained by the enhypostasis), in no way denies the true humanity of Christ, nor gives any allusion to a concealed or blatant Docetism. The issue therefore for Barth is not to deny the true humanity of Christ, but the autonomous existence of His humanity (CD IV/2:49).

But to this objection we may reply with Hollaz (loc. Cit.): Perfectio rei ex essential, non ex subsistentia aestimanda est. It is true enough that the humanum exists always in the form of actual man. This existence is not denied to the man Jesus, but ascribed to Him with the positive concept of enhypostasis. But it is hard to see how the full truth of the humanity of Jesus Christ is qualified or even destroyed by the fact that as distinct from us He is also a real man only as the Son of God, so that there can be no question of a peculiar and autonomous existence of His humanity.<sup>197</sup>

We note here, however, that Barth did not adopt the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the strictest sense as they were characterized by Lutheran and Reformed dogma. Recognizing the historical / theological legitimacy of these terms, Barth adopted them as he saw their place in the revelation of Jesus Christ expressed by the time-eternity and veiling-unveiling dialectic. In essentials, Barth agreed that Christ's human nature came into existence in the incarnation of the Logos; whereupon the Logos assumed to Himself human nature in the flesh of Jesus. In this sense, Barth agreed with Heppe and Schmid that in the humanity of Christ's union with the Logos, the human nature of Christ is understood to exist as ἐνυπόστατον, having subsistence in the hypostasis of the Logos.

Barth also agreed with Heppe and Schmid that the human nature of Jesus was ἀνυπόστατος, having no existence before its union with the Logos in the incarnation. It is in the anhypostasis, however, where Barth demonstrates an interesting ontological dexterity in his interpretation of the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature. Whereas both the Lutherans and Reformed isolate the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature to that point prior to the incarnation (being non-existent), Barth continues to embrace anhypostasis as a negative characteristic of Christ's human nature even in its union with the Logos. As we will show, Barth's thinking in this regard first emerges in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, which he more fully develops in the *Church Dogmatics*.

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

### 3.2.3 The Göttingen Dogmatics

Having completed his first edition of *Der Römerbrief* in 1919, and in the midst of his first revision in 1921 (*Romans* II), Barth accepted the Honorary Professorship of Reformed Theology at Göttingen where he devoted his first years there lecturing on the Heidelberg Catechism, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, the Reformed Confessions, and Friedrich Schleiermacher.<sup>198</sup> The *Göttingen Dogmatics* (originally entitled: *Unterrichte in der christlichen Religion*)<sup>199</sup> was born out of Barth's lectures on dogmatics given at Göttingen during the period April 1924 – October 1925, and provides helpful insights into his earliest theological thinking. Viewed in its historical context, the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, this *Urdogmatik*, is the forerunner to Barth's *Christliche Dogmatik* of Münster<sup>200</sup> and the *Church Dogmatics* of Bonn and Basel.<sup>201</sup> Interestingly, the Göttingen work is the only larger dogmatics that Barth ever completed. While the volume of material covered in this work is obviously much smaller than that developed in the *Church Dogmatics*, we see enough similarity in basic structure to gain an understanding into Barth's line of thinking at this point of his Christological development.<sup>202</sup>

Barth first adopts the terms *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* to explain how the human nature of Christ exists in union with the Logos in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, where he generally treats these terms as autonomous concepts rather than coupling them together to form an ontological unit. In other words, there is no compelling evidence in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* that Barth expresses

<sup>198</sup> Although Barth arrived in Göttingen less than fully equipped for the task of teaching Reformed theology, he was no stranger to academic theological work having grown up in a household where his father was a Professor of Theology. Moreover, Barth himself had worked on a leading liberal theological journal while a student at Marburg, not to mention his exegetical work on *Romans*, as well as publishing a number of public articles for which he was well known. His lectures at Göttingen not only immersed him into the Reformed theological world, but also produced an early glimpse into his early Reformed theological development (cf. John Webster, *Barth's Earlier Theology*, p. 42).

<sup>199</sup> Barth agreed to this title under compulsion. The Lutheran theological faculty at Göttingen insisted that Barth's lectures be restricted to Reformed Dogmatics. Barth disagreed because he did not want to be restricted to any 'ecumenical tags' in his lectures. His appeal to the Minister of Culture at Berlin was denied. Barth's compromise was to use the title *Unterrichte in der christlichen Religion*, which in reality served only as a cover to his lectures on Church Dogmatics (cf. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, Translater's Preface).

<sup>200</sup> Barth was Professor of Dogmatics and New Testament Exegesis in Münster during the period October 1925 – March 1930. At Münster Barth penned his second Dogmatics work entitled *Die Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf*. Bruce McCormack suggests that Barth wrote this book with the 'Göttingen material before him', resulting in little change in fundamental decisions made in the Göttingen material (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 376).

<sup>201</sup> Barth taught at Bonn from March 1930 – June 1935 where he wrote *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik* I/1. Barth returned to Basle in June 1935 where he taught until his retirement and wrote the remaining volumes of *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, Translater's Preface.



anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a congruous ontological formula to explain the subsistence of Christ's human nature. At the same time we see here (and in the *Church Dogmatics* as well) Barth's polemic use of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dialectic between Lutheran and Reformed Christology, buttressed by a historical / theological frame of reference in his appropriation of these terms. With this in view we will consider Barth's argument for the anhypostasis, which becomes the dominant theme of his ontological argument for Christ's human nature in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*. The enhypostasis on the other hand, although an important ontological concept in Christ's human nature, plays a relatively small role at this stage of Barth's Christological development.

Barth approaches the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature given his presupposition that both the Lutherans and Reformed affirm the 'historical phenomenon' that as the form of revelation Jesus is a 'creature of the triune God'. From this mutual point of Christological agreement, however, there emerges an ontological distinction with respect to Christ's human nature that sharply distinguishes the Lutherans from the Reformed. Whereas the Lutherans understand that, as a *creature*, Jesus is inviolably united to the Logos without qualification; the Reformed understand that, as a *creation*, Jesus is united to the Logos subject to the rule that 'the finite is not capable of the infinite' (cf. *Göttingen Dogmatics* (GD) 90).<sup>203</sup>

What we find particularly interesting in this context is Barth's presupposition that both the Lutherans and Reformed appropriate the term anhypostasis in a 'negative' sense to describe the human nature of Christ, having no real personality or subsistence of its own given its union with the Logos. Furthermore, while assuming a *paradoxical* view of the anhypostasis with respect to Christ's human nature,<sup>204</sup> Barth judges that both the Lutherans and Reformed confused the meaning of anhypostasis so as to deny the personality of Christ's human nature altogether.

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<sup>203</sup> In this context Barth develops the principle of God's self revelation in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, set against the historicity of Jesus that emerged in 18<sup>th</sup> century theology. That is, Barth sharply distinguishes between the 'content' of revelation as God alone versus the 'form' of revelation in Jesus of Nazareth, where Barth speaks against a 'deifying of the creature' in the revelation of God. Barth cites here Heppe and the Reformed argument that the divine attributes (i.e., omnipotence) is reserved for the Logos. See Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* p. 346; ET pp. 436-37.

<sup>204</sup> Barth introduces his transition to the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature by stating that 'The content of revelation is God *alone*.' Although the form is not the content, it is here that one hears: Deus dixit. That is, 'in the humanity of Christ the content of revelation as well as the subject is God alone' (cf. *GD*, 89-90).



Both Lutherans and Reformed, so as to obviate any possible misunderstanding, even went so far as to deny to Christ's human nature any personality at all. The person of the God-man is exclusively the Word, the Logos of God. No matter what we think of this paradoxical thesis, the so-called anhypostasis of Christ's human nature, it would certainly be wiser to consider its content instead of getting worked up about it.<sup>205</sup>

This seemingly innocuous passage in fact reflects the high priority that Barth places upon the God-man; that is, Jesus of Nazareth exists as *very* man, but man who in his humanity cannot be separated in any sense from his union with the second person of the Trinity. Put another way, in His union with the Logos, Jesus of Nazareth in fact becomes one with the Logos of God. This is the Christological principle upon which Barth works out his understanding of the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature. For Barth, no ground can be given here. Jesus Christ is not simply a historical figure (as purported by liberal theology), but He Himself, in His person, is the revelation of God. This ontological grounding becomes foundational for Barth given the 'paradoxical' nature of the anhypostasis. The question therefore that emerges is: how can a human nature, which has no personality or reality in its own being, become very man (i.e. real being) in union with the Logos? Barth anticipates and meets this question in his ontology of the incarnation, and makes a fundamental statement with respect to the union of divine and human natures when he says that: 'The incarnation implies that the Son assumes human nature.'<sup>206</sup>

It is Christ's assumption of human nature that explains 'how revelation is effected'. That is, the eternal Christ, who is unchangeable in His divine nature, unites with His 'divine mode of being' a 'human mode of existence' (*GD* 156). Barth describes the function of this union by explaining:

It is not, then, a changing or alteration of the divine nature of the Son, but with His divine mode of existence the Son takes a human mode of existence, uniting it – the "grace of union" – to His person, just as the divine mode of existence is eternally united to His person, yet without in any way altering His divine mode of existence.<sup>207</sup>

Given this context, it is in the kenosis of the incarnate Son that Barth emphasizes the union of the Logos with human nature, rather than the union of *divine and human natures* in the person of Christ. That is, even in the Son's *emptying* of His divine majesty in His incarnation, Christ does not wholly or partially cease to be the eternal Son of the Father; otherwise, the incarnation would

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<sup>205</sup> Cf. *GD*, p. 90.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. *GD*, p. 156.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

not be the revelation of God. Rather, in the kenosis, the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, an uncompromising unity of the Logos and human nature in the person of Jesus Christ (*GD* 156).<sup>208</sup> And yet, Barth's adoption of the kenosis leads to an open ended expression of this union leaving unanswered how the human nature comes into union with the Logos. In other words, if in His emptying Christ retains His full essence of divinity, how is the union of human nature with the Logos affected? Barth works through this problem dialectically as he examines Lutheran and Reformed orthodoxy of the incarnation.

In his analysis Barth points to an inaccuracy in the 'older Lutherans'<sup>209</sup> and their understanding of the union of divine and human natures in contrast to the older Reformed (and more dynamic view),<sup>210</sup> which stresses the *person* as the divine *subject*. Barth describes the incarnation as 'a personal, not a natural work'<sup>211</sup>, and clearly favors the Reformed view that the Logos (not deity per se), was made flesh in the incarnation. That is, it is not the substance of the Father, the Son and the Spirit as deity that became flesh, but the Son, who became human without ceasing to be deity in the second person of the Trinity. In this way the Son assumes and unites human nature to His person (*GD* 156).

Given that the Son assumes human nature, how does Barth understand this human nature to subsist in this union? In response, we can first say that Barth clearly understands the human nature of Christ to be common to all humanity, yet without sin. He cites Philippians 2:7 in affirming that Jesus subsists in the form of a servant, as a being with a human body and human soul.<sup>212</sup> Barth further describes the human nature of Christ as being 'compressed' into one individual (*GD* 157). He emphasizes that the human nature of Christ 'has never existed anywhere as such' (consistent with both Lutheran and Reformed doctrine), and also emphasizes that the human nature has 'no independent existence alongside or apart from him'.

<sup>208</sup> Barth cites here Calvin's *Institutes* II. 14. 1.

<sup>209</sup> Barth cites J.A. Quenstedt, in Schmid p. 200; Schmid, ET p.298.

<sup>210</sup> Barth cites von Riissen, in Heppe pp. 332-33; ET p. 416.

<sup>211</sup> Barth cites von Riissen in describing the incarnation as 'a personal, not a natural work'.

<sup>212</sup> In describing the kenosis of the Son in his exegesis of Philippians 2:7 Barth states: 'It is thus no fate that overtakes him. Not even the will of the Father is mentioned as the ground of his performing this act of renunciation. He *wills* it so. In sovereign, divine freedom he puts off the form of God, the whole know-ability of his being – that is what *ekenose* means, thus not only that he concealed it. He puts himself in a position where only he himself knows himself in the way that the Father knows him', (cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, p. 63).

The humanity of Christ, although it is a body and soul, and an individual, is nothing subsistent or real in itself. Thus it did not exist prior to its union with the Logos. It has no independent existence alongside or apart from him.<sup>213</sup>

This compression of human nature into the Logos precludes any notion of separate subsistence either ‘alongside or apart’ from its union with the Logos. This ontological framework establishes the revelation of God not in the human individuality of Jesus, but in the individual person of the Logos. It is the eternal Son who takes to Himself human nature in Jesus; certainly not the man Jesus who unites himself with the Son.

This idea, the idea of humanity, and this individual who incorporates it, cannot for a single moment be abstracted from their assumption into the person of the Logos. The divine subject who unites Himself with them makes them revelation.<sup>214</sup>

Herein lays the context in which Barth first appropriates anhypostatos to describe the human nature of Christ as having no subsistence in itself. While he argues that Christ’s human nature is not an individual person (consistent with Protestant orthodoxy), Barth uses anhypostatos as a negative construct that delimits the *very man* of Christ in union with the Logos (inconsistent with protestant orthodoxy). Barth’s thinking emerges more forcibly if we simply ask why he places so much emphasis on the anhypostatos of Christ’s human nature in his ontological argument. As we have shown, this was clearly not the emphasis of Lutheran or Reformed doctrine.<sup>215</sup> The concept of anhypostasis was used to argue that Christ’s human nature had no existence prior to the incarnation. That is, it was not understood as a concept to describe the human nature of Christ. Furthermore, anhypostasis was never accepted by protestant orthodoxy as one side of a two-sided formula in describing the ontology of Christ’s human nature as Barth would suggest. Granted, in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* Barth does not postulate a dual ontological formula in his own language, but he refers to an ‘assumed’ formula with anhypostatos as the negative side of the enhypostasis. Describing Christ’s human nature as anhypostatos, Barth refers to the:

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<sup>213</sup> Cf. *GD*, p. 157.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> D. M. Baillie notes in this respect that ‘even among theologians who profess to accept the full catholic doctrine of the hypostatic union there is a manifest unwillingness to distinguish Christ’s manhood from that of other men by speaking of His ‘impersonal humanity’. In view of the time-honored phrase ‘Though Man, He is not, strictly speaking, a Man’, Baillie goes on to say, ‘But most divines to-day, whether ‘Catholic’ or ‘Dialectical-Protestant’ in their orthodoxy, and even while professing to accept in some sense the *anhypostasia* of Ephesus and Chalcedon, would shrink from such a statement, and would quite naturally and without embarrassment speak of Jesus Christ as a man, just as the New Testament writers surely do’ (cf. D M. Baillie, *God was in Christ*, pp, 15-16).

...formula in which the description culminates. Or, more positively, it is enhypostatos. It has personhood, subsistence, reality, only in its union with the Logos of God.<sup>216</sup>

There is a gentle subtlety in Barth's language here as he moors the terms: personhood, subsistence, and reality into the same mode of existence. When we consider Barth's thinking juxtaposed against the orthodox Lutheran and Reformed Fathers (who asserted that in its essence the reality of existence is not bound by personhood per se), we discover an ontological cleavage between Barth's argument and historical orthodoxy. As we have seen, the orthodox Fathers did not use anhypostasis to describe Christ's human nature negatively; that is, as having no subsistence of its own, but strictly as a way to describe what Christ's human nature 'is not'. In other words, Christ's human nature 'is not' anhypostasis because it enjoys real subsistence in its union with the Logos. Barth's use of anhypostasis to describe Christ's human nature in a negative sense therefore moves beyond the orthodox Fathers in this respect.<sup>217</sup> Even so, we do not understand that Barth intends to move beyond the limits of an orthodox ontology of Christ's human nature, but simply to emphasize that as the subject of divine revelation the Logos assumed to Himself a human nature – *in a man named Jesus*.<sup>218</sup>

Interestingly, the passage cited above is the only one in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* where Barth refers specifically to the enhypostatos of Christ's human nature. As we have seen, the thrust of Barth's development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* centers on the *negative* – on the idea that Christ's human nature, being anhypostatos, has no real subsistence (in itself) in its union with the Logos. This is somewhat counter-balanced by Barth's adoption of enhypostatos, which he uses to describe how Christ's human nature (positively) has personhood, subsistence, and reality in union with the person of the Logos (*GD* 157).<sup>219</sup> As a result, the anhypostatos and enhypostatos manifest opposite sides of the same Christological coin in

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<sup>216</sup> Cf. *GD*, p. 157.

<sup>217</sup> With respect to Barth's understanding of anhypostasis, D. M. Baillie observes that 'Barth is quite clear that the Word became not merely Man, but *a* Man, and insists that the *anhypostasia*, the 'impersonality', never meant that the humanity of Christ had no 'personality' in the modern sense (for which the Latin word would be *individualitas*), but that it had no independent existence'. Moreover, Baillie further observes, 'But still more notable is the answer that Barth gives to the question whether it was fallen or unfallen human nature that Christ assumed in the incarnation. He knows very well that the orthodox tradition, whether Catholic or Protestant, has always most explicitly answered: 'Unfallen human nature.' But Barth himself quite boldly answers: 'Fallen human nature', and maintains that this is what is meant by the Word becoming not only *man* but *flesh*' (cf. D. M. Baillie, *God was in Christ*, p. 16).

<sup>218</sup> Cf. *GD*, p. 157.

<sup>219</sup> Barth cites both Lutheran and Reformed here: Schmid-Pohlmann, pp. 201-2; Schmid ET pp. 300-301; Heppe, p. 334; ET pp. 417-18.

explaining how Christ's human nature is united ontologically with the Logos. In this way Barth grants that Christ's human nature enjoys subsistent reality in union with the Logos, while providing an ontological counter balance to the anhypostatos.

Barth further argues for the orthodoxy of his adoption of anhypostatos by citing both Lutherans and Reformed in their affirmation of the early church description of Mary as the mater Domini, theotokos, deipara, the God-bearer.<sup>220</sup> Barth reasons that the incarnation bears witness to the reality of Mary giving birth to God's Son, who although He was born in the flesh of human nature, manifested reality as a human being in the person of God's Son (*GD* 157). It is this reality, Barth's uncompromising emphasis that the Logos takes to Himself human nature, which defines the human nature of Christ as anhypostasis, and which Barth believes should be apparent given the very nature of the incarnation. This anhypostatos, however, remains paradoxical as Barth stresses the reality of Christ's human nature in Jesus, yet always with the caveat that this reality is reality only in the Logos who assumed to Himself the flesh of humanity. We note also, however, that Barth's emphasis on the anhypostasis is not intended to portray any docetic sympathies, but is simply used to explain how Christ's human nature manifests itself in its union with the Logos.<sup>221</sup>

A further inference is that those who saw and heard and handled Jesus did not see and hear and handle a mere appearance or vesture or dwelling of the Logos but the Logos himself in the flesh of Christ. To be sure, it was the servant form of the human nature – and this means here, too, the indirectness of revelation, the possibility of offense, the demand for faith – but it was still the Logos himself, not a second alongside him.<sup>222</sup>

While Jesus was indeed a real human being with a real body, mind, and soul, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is not derived strictly in the flesh, which in Barth's thinking is nothing more than a 'divinization of the creature' (*GD* 158). Rather, as anhypostatos, the human being of Jesus

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<sup>220</sup> Barth cites from the Lutherans A. Calov, *Systema locorum theologicorum*, VII (Wittebergae, 1677), pp. 187-88; J. A. Quenstedt, *Theologia didactico-polemica*, Part III c, paragraph 2, vol. III, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Wittebergae, 1701), p. 152. Among the Reformed cf. the Leiden Synopsis, in Heppe, p. 334; ET p. 418; and J. Wolleb and L. van Risen, in Heppe, p. 352; ET p. 444.

<sup>221</sup> Barth's Christology remains consistent in its abject denial of any docetic understanding of Christ's human nature. This ontological presupposition takes on a fervent expression particularly in the *Church Dogmatics* where Barth emphasizes the realness of Christ's human nature as the absolute and necessary reality in Christ's role as mediator between God and humanity.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. *Göttingen Dogmatics*, p. 158.

exists only in and through Christ. This principal emphasis governs Barth's thinking with respect to this doctrine such that 'apart from the Logos He could not consist for a moment'.<sup>223</sup>

In view of our consideration of Karl Barth's development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, we can identify four key points that summarize his adoption of these terms at this stage of his Christological development:

1. Barth adopts the term anhypostatos to describe the human nature of Christ negatively, having no separate reality of being in its union with the divine Logos.
2. There is a theological cleavage between Barth's understanding of anhypostasis and orthodox protestant Christology with respect to the reality of the human nature of Christ and its union with the Logos.
3. Barth adopts the term enhypostatos to describe the human nature of Christ positively, having subsistent reality in its union with the Logos.
4. Barth develops anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as autonomous, rather than congruent ontological concepts to explain Christ's human nature.

In the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, the emphasis of Barth's adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis rests upon the anhypostasis, which he interprets as protestant orthodox dogma in denying the subsistent reality of Christ's human nature in union with the Logos. In this way Barth moves beyond Lutheran and Reformed orthodox Christology, which does not use anhypostasis to deny the separate reality of Christ's human nature in union with the Logos, but simply to affirm its non-existence prior to the incarnation, which in effect precludes any notion of two persons united in the Logos.

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<sup>223</sup> Barth cites Keckermann in Heppe, p. 334; ET p. 444.

### 3.2.4 The Church Dogmatics

Karl Barth's fullest development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the human nature of Christ occurs in the *Church Dogmatics*, which he presents in three distinct sections listed below:

1. *The Doctrine of the Word of God* – CD I/2 (1939)
2. *The Doctrine of Creation* – CD III/2 (1945)
3. *The Doctrine of Reconciliation* – CD IV/2 (1955)

Fourteen years after Barth first adopted anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* to explain the human nature of Christ, these terms find Christological expression once again throughout the *Church Dogmatics* where Barth transitions from a rather incongruous treatment of these terms, to an ontological union of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the subsistence of Christ's human nature. Nevertheless, in this movement Barth does not waver ontologically in his understanding of Christ's human nature as a non-subsistent being, having been assumed by its union with the Divine Logos. In other words, Barth continues to express the human nature of Christ negatively as anhypostasis; that is, as a non-subsistent being, which is counter-balanced by the subsistent reality of the enhypostasis, as enjoined through its union with the Logos. In our analysis of the *Church Dogmatics* we will consider Barth's interpretation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in each of the three sections where he uses these terms to explain the ontology of Christ's human nature.

#### The Doctrine of the Word of God – CD I/2

Barth's most precise treatment of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Church Dogmatics* is found in the *Doctrine of the Word of God*, the impetus of which emerges from Barth's desire to explain in tangible language – supported by historical / theological orthodoxy – how the Logos comes into union with human nature manifested in the person of Jesus Christ *as a real person*. The underlying ontological principle expressed by the use of these terms is that the eternal Logos assumes to Himself human nature, which is made manifest in Jesus Christ. Barth emphasizes this point in his introductory comments to this section when he says:



But from the utter uniqueness of this unity follows the statement, that God and man are so related in Jesus Christ, that He exists as Man so far and only so far as He exists as God, i.e. in the mode of existence of the eternal Word of God.<sup>224</sup>

Barth clearly understands and argues for the historical orthodoxy of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis used to explain how the human nature of Christ comes into union with the divine Logos: ‘What we therefore express is a doctrine unanimously sponsored by early theology in its entirety, that of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis of the human nature of Christ’ (CD I/2:163).

In citing ‘early theology’<sup>225</sup> and its ‘unanimous agreement’ Barth suggests that both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis were historical / orthodox Christological terms used to explain the ontology of Christ’s human nature. Barth’s understanding here is consistent with the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, and sets the stage for his further development of the interrelationship of these terms, which is demonstrated by his coupling of them into one ontological statement (i.e. as expressed by the formula anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis).<sup>226</sup> Herein, Barth lays down more concrete language to first explain the anhypostasis as the negative characteristic of Christ’s human nature, having no existence prior to the incarnation, and its union with the Logos in the event of the ἐγένετο.

Anhypostasis asserts the negative. Since in virtue of the ἐγένετο, i.e., in virtue of the assumptio, Christ’s human nature has its existence – the ancients said, its subsistence – in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (hypostasis, “person”) of the Word, it does not possess it in and for itself, in abstracto. Apart from the divine mode of being whose existence it acquires it has none of its own; i.e., apart from its concrete existence in God in the event of the unio, it has no existence of its own, it is ἀνυπόστατος.<sup>227</sup>

We observe two key components in this statement to explain the anhypostasis of Christ’s human nature. First, Barth notes that the Logos assumes to Himself a human nature that did not exist prior to its union with the Logos. In other words, this human nature does not possess being in and of itself (in abstracto), but strictly in its union with the Logos, which Barth accurately notes was

<sup>224</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 163.

<sup>225</sup> We understand Barth to refer here to the patristic Fathers who worked with the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis (and variations thereof) in defense of Chalcedon. In Chapter 2 we examined four significant figures of the patristic era that were actively engaged in this debate.

<sup>226</sup> Torrance recognizes Barth’s adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a couplet formulation, but also attributes this coupling to earlier theology: ‘In particular I was gripped by the way in which he resurrected and deployed the theological couplet anhypostasias and enhypostasias to throw into sharp focus ‘the inner logic of grace’ (as I called it) embodied in the incarnation, with reference to which, not least as it had taken paradigmatic shape in the Virgin Birth of Jesus, all the ways and works of God in His interaction with us in space and time may be given careful formulation’ (cf. T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, 1990:125).

<sup>227</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 163.



the argument of the ancients (patristic Fathers). Secondly, Barth concludes that ontologically, the absence of being outside its union with the Logos logically demands the human nature to be understood negatively as ἀνυπόστατος in this union. As we have shown, this is at variance with the patristic Fathers, as well as scholastic and post-scholastic orthodoxy, who did not apply ἀνυπόστατος to Christ's human nature as a negative characteristic of His being.

Barth then applies the second half of the ontological statement (or formula) as the positive aspect of Christ's human nature. In describing Christ's human nature as ἐνυπόστατος Barth grants that it has 'concrete existence' of its own by virtue of the ἐγένετο.

Enhypostasis asserts the positive. In virtue of the ἐγένετο, i.e. in virtue of the assumptio, the human nature acquires existence (subsistence) in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (hypostasis, "person") of the Word. This divine mode of being gives it existence in the event of the unio, and in this way it has a concrete existence of its own, it is ἐνυπόστατος (*CD* I/2:163).<sup>228</sup>

The material point that we take away from this statement is that positively the ἐνυπόστατος of Christ's human nature is ontologically joined – *in the event of its union with the Logos* – to the negative ἀνυπόστατος of the same human nature. Even so, we ask if this formulation of the positive aspect of Christ's human nature legitimately represents the fullness of His existence. This is the question that Barth repeatedly addresses throughout the *Church Dogmatics* in his use of this theologoumenon.<sup>229</sup>

<sup>228</sup> With respect to the 'negative and 'positive' aspects of the an-enhypostasis in Barth's definition, Oliver Crisp suggests that, 'This way of speaking about the *anhypostatos physis* and *enhypostatos physis* is, it seems to me, somewhat misleading, for it could be taken to mean that the two aspects of the an-enhypostasia distinction are negative and positive ways of stating the same thesis. But this is not the case' (cf. Oliver D. Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity*, p. 74). But in fact this is exactly what Barth does in joining both anhypostasis and enhypostasis into one congruent clause to describe the human nature of Christ.

<sup>229</sup> Torrance understands the negative anhypostasis to be appropriately counter balanced by the positive enhypostasis in Barth's development of Christ's human nature: 'Karl Barth's participation in this struggle for the unity and integrity of the faith is particularly evident in his rich understanding and deployment of the theological couplet *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia*, which was designed to carry the doctrine of the hypostatic union in Christ further in a positive way. The negative term an-hypostasia asserts that apart from the incarnation of the Son of God Jesus would not have come into being and exists as a completely human person in the full hypostatic reality of the incarnate Son of God. It asserts that Jesus Christ did not have an independent hypostasis which was then adopted into union with the divine hypostasis of the Son of God, but that thanks to the pure act of God's grace, in coming into being Jesus Christ was given a complete human hypostasis in, and in perfect oneness with, the divine hypostasis of the Son. The theological couplet *anhypostasia/enhypostasia* expresses in succinct hypostatic terms the essential logic in the irreversible movement of God's grace...However, by grace alone does not in any way mean the diminishing far less the excluding of the human but on the contrary its full and complete establishment. The

Barth affirms that as ἐνυπόστατος the human nature of Christ enjoys concrete existence of its own in union with the Logos, and cites the Second Council of Constantinople (553) in which ‘this doctrine was erected into dogma’ (CD I/2:163). In this way Barth demonstrates that the Council’s aim was to guard against the idea of a double existence of Christ as God and humanity. Barth concludes:

...what the eternal Word made His own, giving it thereby His own existence, was not a man, but man’s nature, man’s being, and so not a second existence but a second possibility of existence, to wit, that of a man. We have to take seriously sayings like Lk. 1:32, cf. 35.<sup>230</sup>

In his argument, the *paradoxical* fence that Barth struggles to climb over is explaining how the ‘lack’ of subsistence embodied by the anhypostasis does not deny true humanity to the human nature of Christ in spite of the assumed counter-balancing of the enhypostasis. Having established the formula of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as an orthodox understanding of Christ’s human nature, Barth argues that the absence of the human nature’s self existence does not deny true humanity to Jesus Christ because such an argument misunderstands the Latin term *impersonalitas* used occasionally for anhypostasis (CD I/2:164).

But what Christ’s human nature lacks according to the early doctrine is not what we call personality. This the early writers called *individulatis*, and they never taught that Christ’s human nature lacked this, but rather that this qualification actually belonged to true human being. *Personalitas* was their name for what we call existence or being. Their negative position asserted that Christ’s flesh in itself has no existence, and this was asserted in the interests of their positive position that Christ’s flesh has its existence through the Word and in the Word, who is God Himself acting as Revealer and Reconciler.<sup>231</sup>

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archetypal instance of that was the virgin birth of Jesus. The realisation that anhypostasia and enhypostasia are essentially complementary and must be used together as a double concept derives ultimately from Cyril of Alexandria, but Barth himself seems to have taken it from seventeenth century Reformed theologians. As Barth used it, however, this was a technically precise way of speaking of the reality, wholeness and integrity of the human nature of Jesus Christ in the incarnation, without lapsing into adoptionism, and of speaking of its perfect oneness with the divine nature of Christ without lapsing into monophysitism. Through maintaining the proper differentiation between God and the creation, the negative term is made to serve the positive term in such a way as to stress the indivisible union of the divine and human natures in their undiminished reality in the one person of Jesus Christ. It was thus the strongest way devised by Patristic theology after the Council of Chalcedon to reject any form of schizoid understanding of Jesus Christ such as had been put forward not only in Nestorian heresy, but in the post-Chalcedonian dualism attacked so strongly by Severus of Antioch on the basis of the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria’ (cf. T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, pp.199-200).

<sup>230</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 163.

<sup>231</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 164.

As we reflect on Barth's comments cited above, we are reminded that the patristic Fathers, the Lutheran and Reformed scholastics, Heinrich Schmid, and Heinrich Heppe never understood the human nature of Christ to lack anything in its existence in union with the Logos. If there was any negative connotation in their ontology of the human nature of Christ it was simply to affirm that it did not exist prior to its union with the Logos at the moment of incarnation. Hence, there was never any reason to express *anhypostasis* *and* *enhypostasis* juxtaposed to each other as a way to explain how the positive counter-balances the negative. Barth clearly moves beyond historical orthodoxy in this respect.

It is this counter-balancing of the paradoxical union of *anhypostasis* *and* *enhypostasis* that Barth uses to argue how the revelation of God is manifested in the person of Jesus Christ, which he understands to square with the reality of Christ attested to by the Scriptures.

Understood in this its original sense, this particular doctrine, abstruse in appearance only, is particularly well adapted to make it clear that the reality attested by Holy Scripture, Jesus Christ is the reality of a divine act of Lordship which is unique and singular as compared with all other events, and in this way to characterize it as a reality held up to faith by revelation.<sup>232</sup>

Using the language of *anhypostasis* *and* *enhypostasis* Barth's allusion to the dialectic of veiling and unveiling is readily apparent. The end point for Barth is not to develop an ontological model to explain how the negative feature of Christ's human nature is balanced by the positive in union with the Logos. But rather, Barth wants to provide an ontological basis, supported by orthodox Christology, to explain how eternal God reveals Himself in the flesh of real humanity. Nevertheless, this explanation reverts to a negative grounding of Christ's human nature that exists passively in union with the divine Word.

It is in virtue of the eternal Word that Jesus Christ exists as a man of flesh and blood in our sphere, as a man like us, as an historical phenomenon. But it is only in virtue of the divine Word that He exists as such. If He existed in a different way, how would He be revelation in the real sense in which revelation is intended in Holy Scripture? Because of this positive aspect, it was well worth making the negative a dogma and giving it the very careful consideration which it received in early Christology.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, pp. 164-65.

<sup>233</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, p. 165.

### The Doctrine of Creation – CD III/2

In 1945 Karl Barth published the *Doctrine of Creation* (CD III/2) approximately six years after the *Doctrine of the Word* (CD I/2). While Barth makes only a brief reference to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in this context, it gives us important insight into his understanding of God's creation of, and the relationship to, human nature created in Jesus Christ. The fact that the humanity of Christ is a creation of God does not diminish the fact of His indissoluble union with the eternal Logos.

This man is there in and by the sovereign being of God which He is born and by which He is sustained and preserved and upheld. Not two juxtaposed realities – a divine and then a human, or even less a human and then a divine – constitute the essence of man, this man, but the one, divine reality, in which as such the human is posited, contained, and included. Man, this man, is the immanent kingdom of God, nothing more and nothing in and for Himself. Similarly, the kingdom of God is utterly and unreservedly this man. He is as He is in the Word of God. And the fact that this is so lifts Him above all other creatures. This is the distinction which is His and His alone.<sup>234</sup>

We see in this passage perhaps the true essence of how Barth understands the humanity of Jesus in union with the Logos. The person of Jesus Christ is not, ontologically speaking, the simple joining together of divine and human natures. Rather, He is divine reality manifested in a man; not just any man, but the man lifted above all created men as the Word of God. Jesus is as He is only as He is the Word of God.<sup>235</sup> Based upon this thesis Barth draws heavily upon the formula anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the ontological union of God and humanity.

In this we are repeating in other words the doctrine of the Early Church concerning the anhypostasia or enhypostasia of the human nature of Christ by which John 1:14 (“the Word became flesh”) was rightly interpreted: *ut caro illa nullam propriam subsistentiam extra Dei Filium habeat sed ab illo et in eo vere sustentetur et gestetur* (Syn. Pur. Theol. Leiden, 1624, Disp. 25, 4). The correctness of this theologoumenon is seen in the fact that its negative statement is only the delimitation of the positive. Because the man Jesus

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<sup>234</sup> Cf. CD III/2, pp. 69-70).

<sup>235</sup> Barth agreed with Schleiermacher that Jesus constitutes the first instance in history of a completed human existence. Nevertheless, he rejected the idea that Jesus accomplished this task through a realization of his own inherent capacity for God (CD I/2, 134-35). ...Jesus Christ for Barth is both one hundred percent human and one hundred percent divine. Every act of Jesus is thoroughly human and divine at once. This double agency occurs in such a way that the divinity does not abrogate the humanity, nor vice versa, for Jesus is completely like us in his human nature, differing from us only in the fact that his is a human nature now exalted to its true destiny (cf. William Stacy Johnson, *The Mystery of God – Karl Barth and the Postmodern Foundations of Theology*, pp. 110-111).

came into being and is by the Word of God, it is only by the Word of God that He came into being and is. Because He is the Son of God, it is only as such that He is real man.<sup>236</sup>

Interestingly, we notice that Barth describes the human nature of Christ as ‘anhypostasia *or* enhypostasia’. The counter-balancing of this positive / negative dynamic is seamlessly interwoven into Christ’s human nature as Barth explains that the negative only delimits the positive. Moreover, it is here that the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature converge in the dialectic of both time-eternity and veiling-unveiling. This is the paradox of the creation of Christ’s human nature; this is the mystery of Jesus Christ existing as *very God* and *very man*.

#### The Doctrine of Reconciliation – CD IV/2

Barth’s final expression of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is found in the *Doctrine of Reconciliation* (CD IV/2), which was published in 1955, thirty years after his first appropriation of these terms in Göttingen. This is important to note for two reasons. First, we take notice of the fact that for Barth the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis had not lost its theological fervor in Barth’s thinking. Once again we argue that this understanding of Christ’s human nature in union with the Logos was axiomatic in Barth’s Christology.

Second, this language becomes indispensable for Barth in expressing the union of divinity with humanity in the work of God’s reconciliation with humanity, and in His dialogue with Chalcedon. As we previously noted, Barth appeals historically to the older dogmatics and the use of the term anhypostasis (or impersonalitas) to describe the negative aspect of the human nature of Christ having no personality in his own being.

At this point we reached what the older dogmatics –using the language of later Greek philosophy—described by the term anhypostasis, the impersonalitas of the human nature of Christ. Its ὑποστασις is, longe eminentior, that of the Logos, no other. Jesus Christ exists as a man because as this One exists, because as He makes human essence His own, adopting and exalting it into unity with Himself. As a man, therefore, He exists directly in and with the one God in the mode of existence of His eternal Son and Logos – not otherwise or apart from this mode.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Cf. CD III/2, p. 70.

<sup>237</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 49.

Barth then argues the other side of the formula that Christ's human nature is also enhypostasis, which describes the positive aspect. Barth argues against those who claim the attribute of enhypostasis to deny the true humanity of Christ, nor gives any allusion to a concealed or blatant Docetism. Barth emphasizes here that true humanity exists in union with the Logos, but not as an autonomous existence (*CD IV/2:49*).

It is true enough that the humanum exists always in the form of actual man. This existence is not denied to the man Jesus, but ascribed to Him with the positive concept of enhypostasis. But it is hard to see how the full truth of the humanity of Jesus Christ is qualified or even destroyed by the fact that as distinct from us He is also a real man only as the Son of God, so that there can be no question of a peculiar and autonomous existence of His humanity.<sup>238</sup>

In God's reconciliation of humanity to Himself in the person of Jesus Christ, it is in the absolute unity of humanity in Christ that undergirds Barth's understanding of His humanity. This is not a superfluous Christological principle for Barth, but one which grounds his understanding and appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. The eternal Christ takes true humanity to Himself as our representative in Jesus, but humanity that is unique to all humanity in His unity with the eternal Christ.

We have seen what depends on it: no less than the fact that in Jesus Christ we do not have to do with a man into whom God has changed Himself, but unchanged and directly with God Himself; no less than the unity in which as man He is the Son of God, and as the Son of God man; and finally no less than the universal relevance and significance of His existence for all other men.<sup>239</sup>

Interestingly, Barth uses enhypostasis to answer the question how the human being of Jesus Christ can exist in union with the eternal Logos as the ruler and sustainer of the world:

The answer to this question is that the *enhypostasis* of the human being of Jesus Christ, His existence in and with the Son of God, is sufficiently sharply differentiated from the *sustentatio generalis* in which God maintains and accompanies and rules the whole world by the fact that the existence of God is not in any sense identical with that of the world, or the existence of the world with that of God, in virtue of His creative action, but God has and maintains His own existence in relation to the world, and the world in relation to God.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 49.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p.53.

In this context Barth also explains that the union of humanity in the Logos is not to be compared to human relationships understood as two self-existent beings because the humanity of Christ is also anhypostasis.

For one thing, two self-existent persons are presupposed in those unions, which is not at all the case in respect of the latter [Jesus Christ], in the relationship between the divine Logos and human flesh (*anhypostasis*).<sup>241</sup>

Finally, Barth uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to describe the relationship of the Church to Christ as its head. As the (earthly) body of Christ the Church is brought into union with Christ's earthly-historical form. Barth describes the essence of the Church:

It is of human essence—for the Church is not of divine essence like its Head. But it does not exist in independence of Him. It is not itself the Head, nor does it become such. But It exists (ανυποστατος and ενυποστατος) in and in virtue of His existence.<sup>242</sup>

Barth's allusion to the existence of the Church in Christ as both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is striking. Just as the humanity of Christ negatively has no existence outside of its union with the divine Logos, so the Church negatively has no existence outside its union with its Head; but as His Church it enjoys the reality of existence in this union.

We draw this section to a close noting that in the *Church Dogmatics* Karl Barth transitions from a somewhat autonomous treatment of anhypostasis and enhypostasis previously developed in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, to an ontological formula of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, which he uses to express the human nature of Christ both negatively and positively. We note in this transition, however, that Barth leaves unaltered his understanding that as anhypostasis, the human nature of Christ does not exist in its own reality in union with the Logos. By definition this is the negative characteristic of Christ's human nature. At the same time, as enhypostasis, Barth argues that Christ's human nature enjoys real subsistence in its union with the Logos. The anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis therefore becomes an axiomatic statement to define Christ's human nature both negatively as being non-subsistent (anhypostasis), while at the same time being subsistent (enhypostasis) in its union with the Logos. In interpreting and joining anhypostasis *and*

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 59.



anhypostasis in this way, Barth moves beyond protestant orthodoxy with respect to the ontology of Christ.

### 3.3 Conclusion

As we consider Karl Barth's adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the human nature of Christ, we recognize that these terms are not pervasive (per se) in his Christological language. However, the significance of Barth's assumption of these terms as the ontological grounding for understanding Christ's human nature in union with the Logos is unmistakable.

As we have shown, Barth's dialectic of veiling-unveiling and time-eternity in *Romans II* anticipates the paradox of Christ's human nature, through which Barth's adoption of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in his Dogmatics provides a more precise ontological frame of reference in his Christology. With this in mind we note two particular points with respect to these terms that Barth uniquely claims for himself – *whether he realized it or not*.

First, Barth's adoption of anhypostasis as a negative characteristic of Christ's human nature – in its union with the Logos – is a clear departure from historical protestant orthodoxy, which viewed anhypostasis strictly in the pre-incarnate sense. The patristic Fathers, Lutheran and Reformed scholastics, Heinrich Schmid, and Heinrich Heppe all agreed that the human nature of Christ was a subsistent being in its union with the Logos notwithstanding their use of anhypostasis. Historically speaking, the predominant thinking was to demonstrate that as anhypostasis; the human nature of Christ did not exist prior to the incarnation thereby precluding any argument that the Logos was comprised of two, rather than one person in the advent.

Second, Barth's coupling of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as an ontological expression of Christ's human nature is unique to his Christology. If we consider closely enough the ontological implications of Barth's interpretation of anhypostasis, we can see that he leaves himself little choice but to join anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis closely together so as to preclude the dominance of the anhypostasis that we see in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*. Not only does this coupling give an important ontological foundation to the dialectic of veiling and unveiling, but it also provides a balance to Barth's understanding of the paradox manifested in the human nature of Christ. It is this paradox that Barth continues to work through in his Christology in explaining Jesus Christ as *very God* and *very man*.



## Chapter Four – Anhypostasis *and* Enhypostasis: Revelation of Jesus Christ as the ‘Word became flesh’ in Barth’s Christology

### 4.1 Introduction

One of the great impediments to grasping hold of Karl Barth’s Christology within the larger framework of his theological method is a failure to recognize not only the context, but also the form of his Christological argument. This is especially true in the *Church Dogmatics* where Barth engages a wide spectrum of theological and philosophical protagonists in working out his unique (and sometimes mysterious) Christological thinking.<sup>243</sup> Therefore, understanding both the context and mode of Barth’s argument (dialectical or otherwise), not only brings light to his argument, but also helps guard against the over-characterization of a ‘grand theme’ in an attempt to frame his Christology into a neatly framed paradigm. Karl Barth worked and wrote within specific historical contexts, dictated by the theological, cultural and political questions posed in his day, filtered through his understanding of the Scriptures on one hand, and his consideration of relevant theological / philosophical talk on the other. Furthermore, one must also consider the ongoing (sometimes quite dramatic) development of Barth’s theology over the course of his life that emerged amidst the great challenges posed to German social and religious culture during, and after, the First and Second World Wars. Attempts therefore to over-simplify Barth’s Christology prove to be a dangerous course, and in this respect we must agree with GC Berkouwer that:

The difficulties that meet us in the theology of Barth...arise not so much out of his form of expression as out of his *mode of thinking*. It is therefore necessary to exercise care in characterizing his theology, lest we fall into the danger of over-simplifying the course of its development.<sup>244</sup>

Nevertheless, while the range and complexity of Barth’s theology may preclude the characterization of a single grand theme, we are not left without certain fundamental principles

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<sup>243</sup> George Hunsinger provides helpful insight here. ‘At the point where most other contemporary theologies resort to the language of experience or the language of reason (whether separately or in conjunction, and however conceived), Barth opts instead for the language of mystery. Nothing is more likely to lead the reader of the *Church Dogmatics* astray than a nondialectical imagination. One must never fail to ask about the dialectical conceptual counterparts to the position Barth happens to be developing at any particular moment’ (cf. George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth – The Shape of His Theology*, Preface, ix). We add here that this is especially true with respect to understanding Barth’s conception of the ontological reality of Jesus Christ.

<sup>244</sup> Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 12-13.

developed in Barth's thinking that help us better understand his Christology within the broader context of his theological method.<sup>245</sup> With his break from liberal theology came Barth's relentless pursuit of a theological method, the impetus of which emerged from God's willing condescension towards humankind expressed through His self-revelation in the God-man, Jesus Christ.<sup>246</sup> While for Barth the advent of Jesus Christ remains in many respects an ontological mystery, it is not a mystery void of certain clues given to us in the Scriptures that must be sought out and developed.<sup>247</sup>

With the arrival of the First World War came Barth's disillusionment with the anthropological presupposition that dominated liberal theology, whereupon he turned away from his liberal theological heritage, and turned instead towards the Reformed tradition in mapping out a new theological course as first expressed in the *Epistle to the Romans*. Yet, even in this turning away from liberal theology Barth in no way accepted *carte blanche* traditional Reformed theology into his own theological method. Rather, we clearly see over the course of Barth's theological development that while he referred to and made use of traditional Reformed texts<sup>248</sup>, pen was put to paper based upon his own Biblical exegesis<sup>249</sup> and deliberations in expressing his theological arguments.

<sup>245</sup> For example, we recognize in Karl Barth's theology the significance of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as the One who bears witness to the Triune God, and His covenant to reconcile and redeem humanity. Recognizing the dialectic nature of the veiling and unveiling of God's revelation in the God-man is in fact fundamental to understanding Barth's Christology.

<sup>246</sup> Garrett Green makes the point here that Barth explicitly rejects any human 'point of contact' (*Anknüpfungspunkt*) for revelation. In a reversal of a familiar logical pattern Barth insists that 'both the actuality and the possibility' of the revelatory event are grounded in God. In opposition to virtually the entire modern theological establishment, Barth rejects a philosophical or anthropological foundation for theology (cf. Garrett Green, *On Religion – The Revelation of God as the Sublimation of Religion*, p. 13).

<sup>247</sup> Barth explains, 'The method prescribed for us by Holy Scripture not only assumes that the entelechy of man's I-ness is not divine in nature but, on the contrary, is in contradiction to the divine nature. It also assumes that God is in no way bound to humanity, that His revelation is thus an act of His freedom, contradicting man's contradiction. That is why the language of the prophets and apostles about God's revelation is not a free, selective and decisive treatment of well-found convictions, but—which is something different—witness' (cf. *CD I/2*, p.7).

<sup>248</sup> As a case in point, while Barth was happy to gain acquaintance with (and even accept to some degree) Heinrich Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics*, he received it subject to his own theological frame of reference and exegesis. In the same vein, while Barth studied and taught on John Calvin's theology, he relied upon his own exegesis of the relevant Scriptural texts when developing a theological 'motif'.

<sup>249</sup> Donald Wood argues that Barth was a student and teacher of the Scriptures, and then goes on to say, 'Further, I want to suggest, we need to see Barth not only as an astonishingly confident and creative reader of scripture, but as a theologian who thought deeply about what it means to read well the classical texts of the Christian tradition (cf. Donald Wood, *Barth's Theology of Interpretation*, Introduction, ix).

With this in view, we approach Barth's Christology, and his appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to explain Christ's human nature, with the knowledge that the final arbiter in determining Barth's theological argument is anchored first and foremost in his own exegesis of the Scriptural texts.<sup>250</sup> We do ourselves a great disservice (and Barth for that matter) if we are lax in giving due attention to Barth's willing and aggressive biblical exegesis, along with his 'openness' to hear what the Scripture says within the context of the passage before him.<sup>251</sup> Certainly, Barth is not bound to any traditional or Reformed interpretation of Scripture, and in fact takes great delight in discovering the Word of God for himself as 'contained in the Scriptures' given his exegetical approach, which in many cases provides unanticipated Christological discoveries. Berkouwer reminds us that Barth is keenly aware of the priority and necessity of the Scriptures in his own theological approach.

Barth is clearly aware of the fact that his theological effort is a human undertaking, but that in this understanding the irresistible and overpowering testimony of the Scriptures propelled him forward on this path of unexpected developments.<sup>252</sup>

The Scriptures indeed become foundational in Barth's theological method, not only as an impetus marking his move away from liberal to Reformed theology, but more importantly, because he understands that the Scriptures contain the Word of God and attest to the revelation of God through the life of Jesus Christ.<sup>253</sup> Even so, the Scriptures are subordinated to the revelation of the Word of God made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ; because the writing is not primary, but secondary to the object of its attestation.<sup>254</sup> It is itself the deposit of what was

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<sup>250</sup> This assumes a post Marburg reading of Barth's theology.

<sup>251</sup> In the introduction to his commentary on John 1 Barth describes the work of the biblical expositor. 'Conscientious expositors must be as free as possible from such things as religious or non-religious notions, from philosophical or ethical convictions, from personal feelings or reactions, from historical habits of thought, prejudices, and the like. They must have an ear simply for what the text says to them, for the new thing that it seeks to say in face of the totality of their previous subjective knowledge' (cf. Karl Barth, *Witness to the Word – A commentary on John I*, Introduction, p. 4).

<sup>252</sup> Cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 14.

<sup>253</sup> Barth understands that 'Holy Scripture is the word of men who yearned, waited and hoped for this Immanuel and who finally saw, heard and handled it in Jesus Christ. Holy Scripture declares, attests and proclaims it' (cf. *CD I/1*, p. 108).

<sup>254</sup> Despite Barth's refusal to acknowledge the canon as the infallible Word of God, he nevertheless acknowledges its indispensable nature as that which contains the Word of God. In this respect Barth recognizes that the apostolic succession of the Church must mean that it is guided by the Canon, that is, by the prophetic and apostolic word as the necessary rule of every word that is valid in the Church (cf. *CD I/1*, p. 102).

once proclamation by human lips (*CD I/1:102*). The Bible is God's Word to the extent that God causes it to be His Word as He speaks through it (*CD II/1:109*).<sup>255</sup>

The Word of Scripture in its very different time and with its very different temporal content as compared with the Word of revelation is now put in its proper position. It is called the Word of the prophets and apostles, and as such, as witness of Christ and in subordination to the Word of Christ, it also speaks the Word of Christ.<sup>256</sup>

Barth's exegesis demands that the Word of God in the Bible must manifest itself by becoming the Word of God, in its revelation to us, through its attestation to the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Bible therefore is not in itself God's past revelation, but that which bears witness to God's past revelation in the form of attestation (*CD I/1:111*).<sup>257</sup> Because the Bible attests to the revelation of God, to the event of Christ becoming flesh, the exegete must be cautious to guard against possible violence to the text. The exegesis of the Bible therefore should be left open on all sides, not for the sake of free thought, as liberalism would demand, but for the sake of a free Bible (*CD I/1:106*).

Barth's understanding of the organic relationship between the attestations of Scripture to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is always marked by event, by God in action, by God's willingness come to us and manifest Himself as our only means of knowing Him.<sup>258</sup>

We can never hear Holy Scripture and simply hear words, human words, which we either understand or do not understand but along with which there is for us no corresponding event. But if so, then neither in proclamation nor Holy Scripture has it been the Word of God that we have heard. If it had been the Word of God, not for a moment could we have looked about for God's acts. The Word of God itself would then have been the act. The

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<sup>255</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg observes 'The three forms of the Word in Barth are presented in such a way that the claim to communicate God's Word refers back from Christian proclamation to scripture and from scripture to Jesus Christ as the Word of God revealed. Christ alone as the revelation of God is directly God's Word. The Bible and church proclamation are God's Word indirectly and derivatively. They have to become God's Word in specific occasions as witness is borne to Jesus Christ (cf. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 235).

<sup>256</sup> Cf. *CD I/1*, p. 148.

<sup>257</sup> Barth understands that the revelation of God in this world is manifested exclusively in the person of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures can only bear witness to that revelation. It is therefore as a witness to the revelation of Christ that the Scriptures derive their authority (*CD I/1*, p. 112). This must be so in view of the human element as the basis of Scripture, which are human attempts to repeat and reproduce this Word of God in human words and thoughts and in specific human situations (*CD I/1*, p. 113).

<sup>258</sup> Barth also writes that we cannot speak of God. That is, to speak of God means that we speak on the grounds of revelation and faith. 'To speak of God would mean to speak that word which can only come from God Himself: the Word, God becomes man...Our theological task is to say that *God* becomes *human* and to say it as the Word of *God*, as God would say it' (cf. Karl Barth, 'The Word of God as the Task of Theology', *The Word of God and Theology*, Translated by Amy Marga, p. 185).

Word of God does not need to be supplemented by an act. The Word of God is itself the act of God.<sup>259</sup>

This fundamental principle takes on early and vibrant expression in Barth's Christology, and in effect seals his move away from liberal (*anthropologically centered*) theology to a Christological (*Christ centered*) method that finds its impetus and forcefulness in the Scriptures, which attest to the revelation of the righteousness of God made manifest in Jesus Christ. Human reason alone, although a legitimate and God endowed attribute, has no capacity in itself to make such a move. Any thought of doing so is a failure to properly distinguish the divine from the human.

The reason sees the small and the larger but not the large... It sees what is human but not what is divine. We shall hardly be taught this fact by men. One man may speak it to another, to be sure. One man may perhaps provoke another to reflect upon the "righteousness of God." But no man may bring another to the peculiar, immediate, penetrating certainty which lies behind the phrase.<sup>260</sup>

While we observe in Barth's theology the undeniable theme of the self-revelation of the Triune God in the person of Jesus Christ, we also observe this theme amidst its complexities, paradoxes, and nuances in Barth's theology.<sup>261</sup> When Barth speaks of the person of Jesus Christ as self-revelation, he speaks of him as a creature in the human nature of the man Jesus, which is at once the means and limitation of God's self-revelation; a God who reveals Himself in the flesh of Jesus, yet remains hidden in the midst of this revelation. As a creature, however, this self-revelation of God is God, who reveals in its unity and entirety, the Trinitarian identity of God.<sup>262</sup>

Keeping these concepts close at hand, our objective in this chapter is to consider how Karl Barth develops the revelation of Jesus Christ as the 'Word became flesh' given his unique appropriation of *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* as the ontological foundation of Christ's human nature. We will do so in four separate, yet, interrelated movements. First, we will assess Barth's theological / philosophical method in expressing the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Second we will examine *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum* and Barth's argument that Jesus Christ is the true instrument of revelation. Third, we will investigate the revelatory interrelationship

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<sup>259</sup> Cf. *CD I/1*, p. 143.

<sup>260</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, 'The Righteousness of God', pp. 9-10.

<sup>261</sup> George Hunsinger rightfully observes in Barth's theology how his work combines genuine unity with irreducible complexity (cf. George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth – The Shape of His Theology*, p.22).

<sup>262</sup> Cf. George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth – The Shape of His Theology*, p. 79.

between Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express Christ's human nature, and his development the ἐγένετο – the 'Word became flesh'. Fourth, we will examine how Barth uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectically to express the humanity of Christ in dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology.

#### 4.2 Theological / Philosophical Method and the Revelation of God in Karl Barth's Christology

It is indeed a tenuous path to tread in assessing the role of philosophy in Karl Barth's Christological method.<sup>263</sup> Barth's Christology is unusually marked by the acute nature of his movement away from liberal theology to the Reformed tradition,<sup>264</sup> but in a way that includes an ongoing dialogue with philosophy.<sup>265</sup> There is, however, little consensus among scholars over the true nature and extent of philosophical 'influence' in Barth's theology. One side argues that Barth completely divorces philosophy from his theology, while the opposite side identifies doctrinal distortions in view of his over reliance on philosophy.<sup>266</sup> Such polar opposite views bespeak a complexity in Barth's theology, which raises a fundamental question regarding his understanding of the revelation of God in the flesh of Christ; that is, what is the pre-suppositional nature of Barth's understanding of the human nature of Christ as the mode of God's revelation?

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<sup>263</sup> Barth himself describes the tenuous relationship between theology and philosophy. 'For example, is there anything more hopeless than the attempt that has been made in the last two hundred years with ever-increasing enthusiasm to create a systematic link-up, or synthesis, or even a discriminate relationship, between the realms of theology and philosophy? Has there been one reputable philosopher who has paid the least attention to the work which the theologians have attempted in this direction? Has it not become apparent that the anxiety and uncertainty with which we pursued this course only reminded us that we can pursue this course only with an uneasy conscience? Theology can become noticed by philosophy only after that moment when it no longer seeks to be interesting. Its relation to philosophy can become positive and fruitful only after it resolutely refuses to be itself a philosophy and refuses to demonstrate and base its existence upon a principle with, or alongside of philosophy' (cf. Karl Barth, *God in Action*, p. 42).

<sup>264</sup> When we speak of the 'acute nature' of Barth's movement towards Reformed theology we refer primarily to the dramatic change in his theological thinking, which finds its impetus in a re-calibrated understanding of the nature of the revelation of God attested to in the Scriptures, and made manifest in Jesus Christ.

<sup>265</sup> Kenneth Oakes argues that Barth's break with liberal theology was not as acute as usually portrayed. Rather, Barth's eventual break developed over time not so much out of Barth's disagreement with the epistemology of his teachers, but more over Barth's 'liberal' political views given his involvement with the religious socialists and the worker movements, and dissatisfactions with some of the dualism within Hermann's thought (cf. Kenneth Oakes, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, p. 58).

<sup>266</sup> Cf. Kenneth Oakes, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, pp. 5-8.



In other words, how do we characterize Karl Barth's theological / philosophical method as an expression of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ?<sup>267</sup>

This is quite relevant given a philosophical view of revelation, the impetus of which is based upon human cognition, set against a theological view of revelation, the impetus of which is the movement of God in free grace towards humanity (as portrayed by Barth in His Christology).<sup>268</sup>

We will address these inquiries first by briefly reviewing Barth's theological / philosophical grounding at Marburg specific to the revelation of God, and second by examining how Barth's expression of the revelation of God in his Christology (given the back drop of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis) shapes his interaction with philosophy.

#### 4.2.1 Theological / Philosophical Revelation and the Marburg School

After two years of study at the University of Bern, Karl Barth was anxious to continue his theological studies at Marburg.<sup>269</sup> However, in view of Fritz Barth's opposition to liberal Marburg theology, and Karl's resistance to his father's preference for Halle or Greifswald, they compromised on Berlin where Adolf von Harnack made the biggest impression on Barth, and where he also studied Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Speeches on Religion to its Cultured Despisers*, and Wilhelm Hermann's *Ethics*.<sup>270</sup>

<sup>267</sup> G.C. Berkouwer takes a somewhat balanced view of Barth's theological / philosophical method, and suggests that while Barth understands the danger of presupposition (especially philosophical ones), he nonetheless makes relative this danger where he holds that elements of philosophy can be 'employed in the service of theological activity... 'On the one hand, it must be fully acknowledged that all manner of presuppositions in a given theology can darken the light of the gospel: on the other hand, it is not legitimate to reconstruct a theology – in this case, Barth's – in light of such presuppositions. In this manner it is possible and legitimate fully to come to an understanding of Barth's theological views, while at the same time fully recognizing that these views hang together intimately with fundamental presuppositions' (cf. G.C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 19-22).

<sup>268</sup> Bruce McCormack astutely notes with respect to Barth's understanding of the metaphysical world from the early days of his dialectical theology to the very end that for Barth, to rightly speak of God one must begin and end with Him, which meant beginning with Christology as the self-revelation of God 'the presence of God in the sphere of human knowing, God's personal act of making Himself an "object" of human knowing in such a way that He remains subject' (cf. Bruce McCormack, 'Why Should Theology be Christocentric? Christology and Metaphysics in Paul Tillich and Karl Barth', *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 45 no 1 Spr. 2010, p. 64).

<sup>269</sup> David Mueller notes in Barth's early theological education that 'The most significant event in Barth's intellectual pilgrimage at Bern occurred during the fourth semester, when he encountered both Kant's philosophy and Schleiermacher's theology. This intellectual liberation made Barth anxious to pursue his theological training with Wilhelm Herrmann of Marburg, the leading neo-Kantian theologian of the day' (cf. David Mueller, *Karl Barth – Makers of the Modern Theological Mind*, p. 15).

<sup>270</sup> Cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 37.



In April 1907 Barth returned from Berlin, and once again enrolled at Bern, but then in October (at the insistence of his father) Barth went off to Tübingen.<sup>271</sup> However, in the summer semester of 1908 Fritz Barth finally consented to Karl's desire to study at Marburg<sup>272</sup> where Barth's early philosophical development took more tangible form through the neo-Kantianism influence of Herman Cohen (1842-1918) and Paul Natorp (1854-1924), through Wilhelm Herrmann (1846-1922).<sup>273</sup> Wilhelm Herrmann's teaching had the greatest influence on Barth in whose concept of revelation are the themes of life, faith, and experience for the believer in Christ.<sup>274</sup> Hermann's writings focused on the experience and divine power of *Offenbarung* (revelation). For Hermann, personal experience was primary over, and separated from, dogma. The *Ursprung* (origin) must be recognized as the primary place in religion in the event of revelation, which is just as supernatural as faith.<sup>275</sup>

Revelation in Hermann's thinking exists as a dual structure (a mixture), but a structure that is in fact anthropologically centered, where the human being has a desire to be truthful, but is unable to do so autonomously. This state is met from the theological side when the individual experiences a supernatural power (*Offenbarung*), which creates in the individual a new moral identity. Hermann called this revelatory event *Selbstbehauptung* (self-affirmation). A person who truly desires to be alive self (*das etwas für sich selbst sein will*) can only draw this power from the hidden resource (*aus dem Verborgenen*) in free self-surrender. We seek God when we long for this reality, and we encounter this reality when God reveals Himself to us (*so offenbart sich*

<sup>271</sup> Fritz Barth insisted upon Karl's move to Tübingen in his last ditch effort to 'moderate' Karl's more liberal bent (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, pp. 42-43).

<sup>272</sup> Kenneth Oaks notes that in March of 1908 Barth heard Hermann deliver a speech entitled 'Gottes Offenbarung an uns' where 'Barth would have heard Hermann put forth two characteristic theses of the theologian's later thought: God only becomes knowable inasmuch as God makes Himself known, and the proper response to this revelation is a pious subjection to Jesus Christ. Hermann's first thesis is later expanded into the argument that one can only know God inasmuch as God enlivens and awakens the individual in moral transformation' (cf. Kenneth Oaks, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, p. 28).

<sup>273</sup> Roger A. Johnson observes that 'Natorp and Cohen are the primary philosophical spokesmen of the movement; Herrmann, as a theologian, appropriates their basic epistemology and philosophy of culture and religion, as this provides the context for his constructive theological work' (cf. Roger A. Johnson, *The Origins of Demythologizing*, p. 39).

<sup>274</sup> After Barth completed his university studies at Marburg in 1908 he stayed on for another year working as an editorial assistant for *Die Christliche Welt* where he became more intimately acquainted with Hermann's 'mixture of Kant's critical philosophy and the Schleiermacher of the Speeches, his disdain for both conceptual and historical apologetics within theological work, and his constant emphasis upon the presence of Jesus within the individual' (cf. Kenneth Oaks, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, p. 28).

<sup>275</sup> Cf. Simon Fisher, *Revelatory Positivism? Barth's Earliest Theology and the Marburg School*, p. 144.

*uns Gott*).<sup>276</sup> The locus of God's revelation emerges from the hidden depths of human *Erlebnis* (experience). God acts in this hidden dimension of an individual life, which is veiled from science, generalities, and objectivities.<sup>277</sup>

Although theological knowledge of revelation was considered valid in its own way at Marburg, it was accepted as being different in kind and quality from that acquired by philosophy. Hermann agreed with Cohen that knowledge of God had its *Ursprung* in revelation along with its implications for morality. He also agreed with Natorp with respect to the experiential side of revelation. However, Hermann argued against both Cohen and Natorp that an actual divine, life giving power is effective in revelation, and which is experienced as it is given by something *jenseits* (beyond) human consciousness. Hermann argued that neo-Kantian *Wissenschaft* (science) could not assess the cognitive claims to the experience and supernatural work of God's revelation in that event. 'The active God of revelation, therefore, could not be made into a logical concept (Cohen) nor be reduced to an imminent objectless feeling that accompanies every act of consciousness (Natorp)'.<sup>278</sup>

In summary, we observe in Marburg (Herrmannian) neo-Kantianism an unwieldy synthesis of anthropological and theological epistemology where the human impetus for attaining knowledge of God becomes a general principle, which in turn condescends to God its willingness to acknowledge the revelation of God.<sup>279</sup> Barth's commitment to Herrmann ensures that his early theological thinking bears the marks of centuries of German intellectual life.<sup>280</sup> Interestingly, Bultmann sees in Barth at this early stage of his theological development (as a product of Marburg and a Herrmann disciple) a critical extension of liberal theology. That is, theology was being redeemed out of the deadness of subjectivism into 'speech concerning God', who is not

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid. p. 145 (cf. *Schriften*, ii. 108-9).

<sup>277</sup> Ibid. p. 145.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid. p. 146.

<sup>279</sup> Bruce McCormack argues that with the near collapse of the German culture after the First World War came the passing away of a Marburg neo-Kantianism and its scientific grounding (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 49).

<sup>280</sup> Barth's Herrmannian education 'in which he was formed was not only broadly post-Kantian in distinction between religion and culture, but also dealt with and responded to higher criticism of Scripture, a secularized reading of church history and confessions, and the History of Religious schools...there was a strong distinction between (1) the individual's experience of faith and God's love and forgiveness; and (2) either a transcendental or empirical determination of the human subject and its acting, knowing, and being in general. The work of theology falls within the first realm, while the work of psychology, history, and philosophy in the second' (cf. Kenneth Oakes, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, p. 27).

subject to our human disposal but One in whom we enter into relationship with as we trust in Him in the midst of uncertainty.<sup>281</sup> The problem in Herrmann's thought, however, was not the notion that faith has a unique object; that was the element of truth in his conception.<sup>282</sup> The flaw lay in the complete disjunction between faith and knowledge. Barth's departure from Hermann would entail an emphatic insistence that God is really and truly known—that *Gotteserkenntnis* (knowledge of God) is possible.<sup>283</sup> After Barth's break with Hermann he would insist that the reality of God always precedes the knowing activity of human beings. The reality of God therefore becomes that starting point in divine revelation over against Hermannian idealism,<sup>284</sup> the reality that is made manifest in the advent of Jesus Christ.

#### 4.2.2 After Marburg: Theological / Philosophical Revelation in Karl Barth's Christology

In August 1909 Karl Barth bade farewell to Marburg when he accepted the position of *pasteur suffragant* in Geneva, where he first began writing and preaching sermons to a church congregation. In Geneva Barth takes a rather critical view of the Scriptures, 'Calvin's view of the authority of the Bible would be quite wrong for us'. He also attacked the Chalcedonian definition of Christ as he confessed, 'I will gladly concede that if Jesus were like this I would not be interested in him.' But, 'If Christ begins to live in *us*...that is the beginning of Christian faith.' Barth's service to the poor, however, had no small impact in awakening him to the realities of ministry work. Although he still firmly held to the Hermannian maxims learned at Marburg, he began to realize that 'the longer I had to preach and to teach, the more the work of academic theology seemed to me to be somewhat alien and mysterious'.<sup>285</sup>

Barth left Geneva in 1911 to become pastor in the agricultural and industrial community of Safenwil where his Hermannian orientation toward human consciousness with its cognitive reach

<sup>281</sup> Hendrikus Berkhof argues here that Bultmann 'can see Barth on the very line that runs from Schleiermacher's Speeches directly to Hermann' (cf. Hendrikus Hermann, *Two Hundred Years of Theology*, pp. 165-66).

<sup>282</sup> Despite the Schleiermacher and Kantian influence on Hermann's theological / philosophical world, Barth could say, 'Although Hermann was surrounded by so much Kant and Schleiermacher, the decisive thing for him was the christocentric impulse, and I learnt that from him' (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, p. 45).

<sup>283</sup> Cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 65.

<sup>284</sup> Bruce McCormack argues that Barth rejected Hermann's idealism for a 'critical realism'. That is, although Barth never fully abandoned idealism 'where knowledge of the 'given' was concerned, the knowledge whose subject is God must be initiated by God in view of the limits of human knowledge (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, pp. 66-67).

<sup>285</sup> Cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, pp. 57-58.

to experience the revelation of God begins to change.<sup>286</sup> Practically speaking, Barth learned through the day in and day out rigors of the pastorate that the people of his parish, the ones who struggled with the challenges of everyday life in rural Switzerland, had needs that reached beyond the capacity (and perhaps comprehension) of Marburg academic life.<sup>287</sup> Furthermore, his ministry work in Safenwil (which included no small interest in the working conditions and civil affairs of the people of his church and surrounding community), together with the outbreak of World War I forced upon Barth a critical self examination of his theology in view of the willingness of his theological forebears to publicly ascent to the German war effort.<sup>288</sup> In all these events we see the great battle that Barth wages with himself as he begins to work out what it means that God truly and freely reveals himself;<sup>289</sup> that is, what is the true epistemological relationship between the revelation of God and the knowledge of God's revelation in human beings.<sup>290</sup>

In the end, as Barth struggled with how to forge a new theological course, the dominant factor that marked his movement away from Hermannian, neo-Kantian theology to the Reformed understanding of the revelation of God was his turn to, and reliance upon, the Scriptures as the

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<sup>286</sup> Hendrikus Berkhof rightly observes a gradual shift in Barth's thinking with respect to Hermann where Barth's indictment of human consciousness is extended to trans-individual areas of political and social life such as (capitalism, prostitution, alcoholism, etc.). Moreover, Barth employs the negative conception of 'religion' as a means to shield oneself from the righteousness of God. While still consistent with Hermann in understanding God as the fulfiller of human longing in the expression of conscience, Barth now moves away from Hermann in understanding God's opposition to the idolatry of religion (cf. Hendrikus Berkhof, *Two Hundred Years of Theology*, pp. 183-84).

<sup>287</sup> Barth's position in the community led to his significant involvement in socialism and the trade union movement. The class warfare that Barth witnessed in his own parish introduced him to the 'real problems of real life' (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, p. 69).

<sup>288</sup> Of the 'ninety-three German intellectuals' who issued a manifesto supporting the war policy of Kaiser Wilhelm II and Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg were the names Harnack, Herrmann, and Rade. Barth did not know what to make of 'the teaching of all my theological masters in Germany. To me they seemed to have been hopelessly compromised by what I regarded as their failure in the face of the ideology of war' (Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, p. 81).

<sup>289</sup> Simon Fisher posits that the complicated relationship between philosophy and theology at Marburg, as well Barth's later reactions to this approach He adopted as a young man, is the story about conflict between cognitive styles in 'which there were neither victors nor vanquished' (cf. Simon Fisher, *Revelatory Positivism?*, 319-20).

<sup>290</sup> Bruce McCormack argues that for Barth knowledge of God is a cognition which is 'fulfilled in views and concepts. Views are the images in which we perceive objects as such. Concepts are the counter-images with which we make these images of perception our own by thinking them, i.e., arranging them.' However, the human attempt to bring God's revelation to expression in the form of views, concepts, and words is surrounded by an 'external limitation' (the hiddenness of God in His self-revelation in Jesus Christ), and 'internal limitation' (the intrinsic incapacity of human thought and language to bear adequate witness to God) (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Orthodox and Modern – Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 169-170).

fountain head of theological endeavor.<sup>291</sup> And the ground breaking product of this theological / philosophical *re-grounding* came in the form of Barth's exegesis of *Romans*. In many respects Barth's *Römerbrief* (particularly *Romans* II, with which we are primarily concerned) marked a significant transitional period in his theology as he turned to the Bible as the primary source from which to communicate Christian theology.

Lastly: it may not be irrelevant if I now make it quite clear both to my future friends and to my future opponents in England that, in writing this book, I set out neither to compose a free fantasia upon the theme of religion, nor to evolve a philosophy of it. My sole aim was to interpret Scripture...No one can, of course, bring out the meaning of a text (*auslegen*) without at the same time adding something to it (*einlegen*). Moreover, no interpreter is rid of the danger of in fact adding more than he extracts. I neither was nor am free from this danger. And yet I should be altogether misunderstood if my readers refused to credit me with the honesty of, at any rate, *intending* to *ex-plain* the text. I must assure them that, in writing this book, I felt myself bound to the actual words of the text, and did not in any way propose to engage myself in free theologizing.<sup>292</sup>

Barth's turn to the Scriptures, however, did not negate his ongoing dialogue with philosophy, even as it assumed a new place in relationship to his theology. Barth's interaction with philosophy in fact remains quite evident as he admits in the forward to the second edition to *Romans* with respect to the:

...closer relationship with Plato and Kant. The writings of my brother Heinrich Barth have led me to recognize the importance of these philosophers. I have paid more attention to what may be called the writings of Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky that is of importance for the interpretation of the New Testament.<sup>293</sup>

Nevertheless, *Romans* II is first and foremost an exegesis of Paul's letter to the Romans, which launches in earnest Barth's ardent expression of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ – *as a movement of God's grace*.

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<sup>291</sup> With respect to Barth's turn to the Scriptures, David Ford notes, 'In his parish of Safenwil after 1911 Barth was driven to reconsider his liberal theology by finding it inadequate to the demands of preaching, and the attitude of many of his liberal teachers to the First World War confirmed his suspicion of their theology.' Two significant influences in this turn was Herrmann Kutter's stimulus to rethink his notion of God, and Barth's decision that biblical exegesis was the basis on which to build his own theology (cf. David Ford, *Barth and God's Story*, pp. 18-19).

<sup>292</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Author's Preface to the English Edition, ix.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid. The Preface to the Second Edition, p. 4. P.H. Brazier argues that any strict definitions of the influence of Kierkegaard in Barth's *Romans* must be seen as relative. 'Both Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky provided an illustration of life under the gospel and as such were an aid to Barth in the interpretation of the New Testament.' Moreover, Kierkegaard's influence cannot be categorically identified in a unique way from other influences on Barth during the re-writing of the *Romans* (cf. P. H. Brazier, *Barth and Dostoevsky*, p. 169).

*Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no longer. What He was, He is. But what He is underlies what He was. There is no merging or fusion of God and man, no exaltation of humanity to divinity, no overflowing of God into human nature. What touches us—and yet does not touch us—in Jesus the Christ, is the Kingdom of God who is both creator and redeemer. The Kingdom of God has become actual, is nigh at hand.*<sup>294</sup>

*Romans* is certainly not lacking in philosophical dialogue that Barth engages quite aggressively, the theological significance of which continues to be debated.<sup>295</sup> Yet, even in the face of Barth's expansive interaction with philosophy, we recognize in the driving force of his argument that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is a knowledge that can only be bestowed upon humanity from above, and not simply in the form of a philosophical system.<sup>296</sup>

If I have a system, it is limited to a recognition of what Kierkegaard has called the “infinite qualitative distinction” between time and eternity, and to my regarding this as possessing negative as well as positive significance. God is in heaven and thou are on earth. The relation between such a God and such a man, is for me the central theme of the Bible and the essence of philosophy.<sup>297</sup>

This ‘infinite qualitative distinction’ finds its clearest expression in the person of Jesus Christ, who manifests the convergence of time and eternity as the God-man, and who in Himself distinguishes the revelation of the Triune God, in contra-distinction to a philosophical self-discovery of God.<sup>298</sup> In Christ, the revelation of God reaches down to humanity and pierces the

<sup>294</sup> Ibid. Comments included in Barth's exposition of Romans 1:4, p. 30.

<sup>295</sup> As a case in point William P. Anderson argues that ‘Theologically and philosophically it is undoubtedly Søren Kierkegaard who had the greatest impact upon Karl Barth, at least in the early stages of his revolutionary thought. That seems to be obviously apparent in the indebtedness of his thinking to Kierkegaard's attack upon all direct communication and easy living, i.e., living comfortably with God (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p.14). Bruce McCormack, however, argues that beyond question Kierkegaardian language and concepts play a significant role in *Romans* II. But what does such usage tell us about the degree of Kierkegaard's influence on Barth? And the Kierkegaardian understanding of the paradoxicality of the incarnation certainly provided Barth with ample ammunition for stressing the incomprehensibility of a revelation which can take place only as a divine possibility and never as a human possibility. ‘But we overestimate Kierkegaard's importance if we wish to see in him the decisive influence on Barth's thought in this phase’ (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Critically Realistic Dialectic Theology*, pp. 235-236; 240).

<sup>296</sup> Eberhard Busch argues that in both editions of Barth's Epistles to the Romans that he uses distinctive language that distinguishes God from man (‘God is God’, and ‘man is man’). But more than this, the relationship of this God to humanity has to do with God's revelation to humankind in his act of redemption (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth & the Pietists*, p. 79).

<sup>297</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Romans*, p. 10.

<sup>298</sup> This theme in Barth's theology (even at this stage of his Christology) is similarly expressed at Tambach. ‘A critique of reason is complete only when it issues in applied science; God comes in history only through deeds and evidences; he manifests himself in consciousness only through compelling, revealing, immediately, self-confirming



veil of His hiddenness. This is the revelation of God in Christ, which Barth more fully expresses in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature that first emerges in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*. Barth begins the section on 'God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit', with these words: 'The content of revelation in God alone, wholly God, God himself. But as God solely and wholly reveals himself, he makes himself known in the three persons of His one essence.'<sup>299</sup> Not only is the revelation of God the revelation of His Triune essence, but it is strictly grounded in the act of 'His self-revelation'.<sup>300</sup>

God is seen, believed, recognized, and known only in the act of his self-revelation. The human act of seeing, believing, recognizing, and knowing is primarily his work.<sup>301</sup>

Because the content of revelation is God alone, it is not an object of experience as such, although we recognize the instrument or mediator as its form. Barth can therefore say 'that even in the humanity of Christ the content of revelation as well as the subject is God alone.' This is why the understanding of the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature is so important here, because as such the humanity of Christ becomes this instrument of revelation. 'The person of the God-man is exclusively the Word, the Logos of God.'<sup>302</sup>

Furthermore, because the humanity of Christ (as enhypostasis) becomes the mode of God's revelation (as the Logos), Barth can deny any natural claim to the revelation of the Triune God given that 'revelation as God's answer is never and nowhere coincident with the human question represented in the concepts of reason and religion' (*GD*:95). Although Barth demonstrates an unwillingness to negotiate the knowledge (or knowability) of God as anything other than God's self-revelation, he does not refuse a place to philosophy as a legitimate human endeavor, along

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insights and communications—else what is the meaning of all the words about the Word (cf. Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, *The Christian's Place in Society*, p. 284)?

<sup>299</sup> Cf. *GD* p. 87.

<sup>300</sup> The theme of the self revelation of God also now manifests itself quite strongly in Barth's early preaching. And it is the self revelation of God in Jesus Christ that for Barth draws the sharp distinction between our life and the life revealed in Christ. 'The end consists in that it becomes un-mistakenly clear to us that what *we* are, what *we* overlook, what *we* do, is *not everything*; it is not the *final* thing. Jesus lives! That is finality...For it reveals God to us; it places us before *God*; it declares God to us...The impossible is possible, the incomprehensible is revealed' (cf. Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen, *Come Holy Spirit*, 'He Himself', pp. 67-68).

<sup>301</sup> Ibid. p. 87.

<sup>302</sup> In this context Barth defends the anhypostasis in view of what he believes to be the Lutheran and Reformed misunderstanding of its true meaning (*GD*, p. 90).



with all its limitations. But theology and philosophy remain mutually exclusive in their understanding of revelation proper.<sup>303</sup>

Not that we scorn participating in philosophical work, at least as vitally interested dilettantes. Not as though we could promise no good from a dialogue of philosophy and theology. But what we hear philosophers asking about is the knowability of the thing in itself, the absolute, the unconditioned, the origin of things. Before we can sit down and talk, we need to agree first whether this is the same as our own theological question as to the knowability of God. On our side such an agreement might come only on the basis of the completion of our own work, and not before. But even when agreement is reached on the fact that the same thing is meant, or on the extent to which it is, the way in which the question of the knowability of this is handled will have to be different in the two disciplines if philosophy is not to become theology or theology philosophy.<sup>304</sup>

In his extensive work on the history of theological (and philosophical) thought in *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century* Barth emphasizes the parallel, yet distinctive roads taken to apprehend the revelation of God; that between the Word of God and the word of man.<sup>305</sup> As a case in point, in his review of Kant, Barth's distinguishes quite emphatically between revelation and rationalism.

We see, then, upon the one hand the inspiration, whose object resides within ourselves, in so far as the idea of humanity and therefore this moral disposition reside within us too; and, upon the other, the 'influence of another, higher spirit'. It is between these two, between the notions of a 'disposition' proclaiming a divine origin on the one hand, and 'revelation' on the other, between the 'supersensory' and the 'supernatural', that the exact border between the things which can be supposed and the things which may not be supposed, runs, in matters concerning the religion of reason. Anyone who speaks of revelation is bursting the religion of reason asunder, for he is bursting asunder 'mere' reason, he is speaking of something which cannot be an object of empirical knowledge.

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<sup>303</sup> Barth further states that 'The question that dogmatics has to put to preaching would be there even if philosophy could without contradiction accept or proclaim God as an object of possible intellectual or intuitive experience. The doubt that dogmatics would have to raise even were there no critique of pure reason [Kant] rests on the recollection that, according to the definition of preaching, what ministers say about God is suppose to be God's Word. It is what God himself says' (cf. *GD*, p. 326).

<sup>304</sup> Cf. *GD*, pp. 325-26.

<sup>305</sup> Barth observes the penchant of philosophical thinking to chart its own authoritative course, 'Further, eighteenth-century man began to become conscious of his power for science, and of his power through science. The development of the Renaissance, which had been hindered and reduced for almost one hundred and fifty years through the period of religious wars, now began to make immense strides. Once again man, led by a philosophy, which, was only apparently disunited but was in essentials united, began to be conscious—and more forcibly than before—of a capacity for thinking which was responsible to no other authority than himself' (cf. *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, p.39).

The critical philosophy of religion cannot therefore speak of revelation. This, then, is Kant's 'pure rationalism' in this matter.<sup>306</sup>

Barth's rejection of human reason as the means to experience the revelation of God in fact forces philosophy into the role of antagonist, which Barth more forcibly expresses in his book on Anselm. Barth's *Anselm* is not simply a continuing development of the revelation / knowledge of God dynamic expressed in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* (which it is), but a clearing away of the philosophical debris cluttering the distinction between the revelation of God as something received from God, by faith, over against human capacity for obtaining true knowledge of God.<sup>307</sup> Barth notes this distinction in Anselm's thinking: 'Strange indeed the contradiction if, against such a background, what he had intended to say about God were something his thinking had created rather than something received' (*Anselm*:59).<sup>308</sup> Most importantly perhaps we see subsequent to Barth's *Anselm* a greater emphasis on the revelation God in Jesus Christ<sup>309</sup> made manifest in the reality of His person as God and man (i.e. anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis). This God-man is the object of faith, the revelation of God that must precede faith in God, not simply in the existence of God, but in Jesus Christ as the sole means of salvation. This becomes the driving emphasis of Barth's argument in expressing the revelation of God in the *Church Dogmatics*. Faith becomes the line that separates the revelation of God, as attested to in the

<sup>306</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 284.

<sup>307</sup> Kenneth Oakes argues that the *Anselm* book does not 'represent a great conceptual or theological advance beyond the *Göttingen Dogmatics* and the *Christliche Dogmatik*'. Its real value is Barth's discussion on the topics of the existence of God and role of apologetics (cf. Kenneth Oakes, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, p. 74). We do not deny the importance of how Barth deals with the existence of God and the resultant impact on apologetics in *Anselm*. The point, however, that Oakes misses here is that faith, which must first be present (as a gift of God) is only possible both ontically (which takes precedence) and noetically based upon God's self-communication of Himself through His Word. We see therefore in *Anselm* the tangible grounding of faith in the revelation of Christ as the God-man, where the ontological grounding of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis had previously been laid in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*.

<sup>308</sup> Fisher rightfully observes that a later Barth, after his book about *Anselm* at least, continued to regard revelation as given and theology to be faithful. *Nachdenken* (thought) was in obedience to this divine gift; but then, however, revelation was deemed given in an entirely different way from the earliest writings and, as far as its contents were concerned, the revelation was primarily revelation of God, as it were 'in and for himself', and not therefore a revelation of eternal divine-human relatedness in which two foci are equally indispensable. God *an sich* now enters the theological circle as the sovereign revelation, revealer, and revealedness; what is thereby made manifest is the Triune Being of God. Such revelation obviously has its 'effects', but these are secondary and do not constitute revelation nor enter the revelatory constellation. To God alone belong the glory and the efficacy of his manifestations (cf. Simon Fisher, *Revelatory Positivism?*, p. 319).

<sup>309</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar argues that Barth's great shift in establishing the priority of faith over reason came in his book on *Anselm*, which he more fully develops in the *Church Dogmatics* (cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 137).

Scriptures and made manifest through the Word of God, in the person of Jesus Christ, from human reason and contemplation about God.

Even so, Barth posits that no one can approach the Scripture absent some form of philosophical presupposition, ‘a personal view of the fundamental nature and relationship of things’ (*CD* I/2:728).

We have to describe as a philosophy the systematized commonsense with which at first the rationalists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century thought that they could read and understand the Bible, and later, corrected by Kant, the school of A. Ritschl, which was suppose to be so averse to every type of speculation and metaphysics. It is all very well to renounce the Platonism of the Greek fathers, but if that means that we throw ourselves all the more unconditionally into the arms of the positivists and agnostics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we have no right to look for the mote in the eye of those ancient fathers, as though on their side is a sheer hellenisation of the Gospel, and on ours a sheer honest exegetical sense of facts. There has never yet been an expositor who has allowed only Scripture alone to speak.<sup>310</sup>

This passage is important for two reasons. First, while not denying the primacy of the exposition of Scripture, Barth is candid in his belief that philosophical predisposition cannot be fully expunged in the exegete. Indeed, this relationship between the Scripture and philosophy is one of the more complex areas of Barth’s theology.<sup>311</sup> Second, we must not confuse these intricacies with Barth’s clear delineation between the revelation of God made manifest in Jesus Christ, in contradistinction to human reason in experiencing that same revelation.<sup>312</sup>

As a case in point Barth does indeed strictly distinguish between revelation and philosophy in the *Doctrine of Creation*, where the covenant of God, is revealed through the creation of God, in the person of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>310</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *CD* I/2, p. 728.

<sup>311</sup> It is not surprising that questions remain with respect to the relationship between the Scripture and philosophy in Barth’s theology given his understanding of the Word of God revealed in the Scriptures. Kenneth Oakes argues that ‘Barth never settled on an exact and well-defined account of theology and philosophy. In texts separated by only a few years or written at roughly the same time, Barth wrote in a welter of ways about this relationship. He often assembled several arguments or claims within a single work that might appear contradictory, or at least confused, to the more literal-minded. Hence one cannot look at any single text from any one period of Barth’s *oeuvre* and assert that his understanding of philosophy and theology have been presented’ (cf. Kenneth Oakes, *Karl Barth on Theology and Philosophy*, p. 245).

<sup>312</sup> While one can certainly argue the absence of consistent clarity in Barth’s theology between the Scripture and philosophy, we would argue that Barth is quite clear in distinguishing the revelation of God made manifest in Jesus Christ in contra-distinction to philosophical reason in obtaining that same revelation. This is indeed a point of clarity in Barth’s theology that is undergirded in his appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature, and explicitly developed in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* and *Church Dogmatics*.

The character of its theme, established in his way, is what distinguishes the Christian doctrine of creation from all the so-called world-views which have emerged or may conceivably emerge in the spheres of mythology, philosophy and science. It differs from all these by the fact that it is based on God's revelation. But this is not merely a formal difference. It is also material. The Christian doctrine of creation does not merely take its rise from another source. It also arises very differently from all such world-views. It not only has a different origin, but has a different object and pursues a different course. The divine activity which is its object can never become the theme of a world-view.<sup>313</sup>

However, even in Barth's concession of the inevitable philosophical presupposition in theology, he still holds firmly to faith in Jesus Christ as the final distinguishing mark between Christian theology and a philosophical system that seeks to understand the revelation of God.<sup>314</sup> In this way he can say.

Only rarely did the originators of the great philosophical systems have the will or the courage to make plain the possible compatibility of their thought with Christian faith. And when this was attempted, as in the case of Kant and the older Schelling, it was inevitably to the detriment not only of faith but also of the system of ideas. It cannot be overlooked that the shrewd and ardent attempt of Schleiermacher to adopt to a given point the Christology of the Bible and the Church to his own system of the harmony of opposites, of the finite and infinite, of spirit and nature, can hardly be said to have been successful from the standpoint of this particular philosophical presupposition. Christian faith is an element which, when it is mingled with philosophies, makes itself felt even in the most diluted forms, and that in a way that is disturbing, destructive, and threatening to the very foundations of these philosophies. To the extent that it is faith in God's Word, and is even partially true to itself, it cannot become faith in current world-views, but can only resist them (*CD* III/2:10-11).<sup>315</sup>

More than likely, the full measure of philosophical influence on Barth's theology will remain unresolved given the complexity and breadth of his theological method. Nevertheless, we judge in Barth's development of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, that first; philosophy plays an important role as a dialogue partner in his inevitable conclusion that true knowledge of God must proceed from God in the revealed God-man. Therefore, no philosophical system can engender

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<sup>313</sup> Cf. *CD* III/1, p. 34.

<sup>314</sup> Gordon H. Clark calls attention to Barth's rejection of the possibility of knowing God from any universal human capacity, as Schelling and Hegel tried to do. For Barth, any subjective human experience of the revelation of God must first be derived by an understanding of the Word of God (cf. Gordon H. Clark, *Karl Barth's Theological Method*, pp. 30-31).

<sup>315</sup> In his essay 'Revelation in Karl Barth's Theology', Trevor Hart observes that 'Christian faith and speech are essentially response and not essentially source. God produces faith and not vice versa. It is concern which lies behind Barth's relentless appeal to the category of revelation and his particular way of interpreting what is involved in revelation (cf. Trevor Hart, 'Revelation', in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, p. 41).

true knowledge of God, nor even attest to it. Second, the revelation of God is made manifest through the reality of human flesh; that is, flesh assumed by the eternal Logos. Set against human systems of knowledge it does not escape our notice that as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, the flesh of Christ accomplishes that which is humanly unthinkable. The very Word of God speaks through the reality of human flesh making comprehensible that which cannot be comprehended. This is why the dual model of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis carries such weight in Barth's Christology; because in this ontology is realized both ontically (in its substance) and noetically (by faith in its substance) the revelation of God in the God-man, Jesus Christ.

#### 4.3 Anselm: The Grounding of God's Self-Revelation in Karl Barth's Christology

The genesis of Karl Barth's *Anselm: Fides Quarens Intellectum* (1931) came out of a seminar on Anselm's *Cur Deus homo?* in Bonn that Barth hosted in the summer of 1930.<sup>316</sup> A lecture given by Barth's philosopher friend Heinrich Scholz of Münster on the Proof of God's existence, based upon Anselm's *Proslogion*, produced in Barth a 'compelling urge' to deal with Anselm quite differently; that is, to deal with the problematical Anselm, the Anselm of *Proslogion* 2-4.<sup>317</sup> Barth's intent is to clarify, so to speak, Anselm's theology for both Protestants and Roman Catholics alike as he deals specifically with the knowledge of God, a knowledge which can only be made manifest through God's self-revelation.<sup>318</sup>

Although Barth never had the opportunity to revisit Anselm in the context of the *Proslogion*, he never let go of the abiding epistemological principle (the key, as he describes it), which he developed in this work; that is, that the knowledge of God comes about as the result of faith in God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ.<sup>319</sup> This is the abiding key that flows straight from *Anselm*

<sup>316</sup> Barth first came across Anselm while in Münster, making explicit reference to him in the prolegomena in his *Christliche Dogmatik*, which in turn brought down upon him accusations of Catholicism and Schleiermacherianism (cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, p. 205). Bruce McCormack notes that 'Barth first dealt with Anselm extensively in the summer semester of 1926, in his first seminar on *Cur Deus homo?* (the Bonn seminar was a repetition of the 1926 seminar). The fruit of that earlier study is to be found in the *Die Christliche Dogmatik*, where Anselm's way of theological knowledge was advocated as a helpful corrective to that of neo-Protestantism' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 423).

<sup>317</sup> Barth thought the only proper way to assess Anselm's proof of the existence of God in the *Proslogion* was to examine it in view its full context as expressed in the *Proslogion*, 2-4; that is, within the context of his whole theological scheme (cf. Barth *Anselm: Fides Quarens Intellectum*, Preface to the Second Edition).

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Anselm: Fides Quarens Intellectum*, Preface to the First Edition).

<sup>319</sup> Herbert Hartwell argues that in the *Church Dogmatics* Barth abandoned his previous attempt to use an 'existential-philosophical' approach to theology, in favor of the Word of God as the sole source and basis of his theology. He did so because he realized that the knowledge of the absolute truth about God can only be revealed by

into Barth's *Church Dogmatics*,<sup>320</sup> the key that Barth attributes to Anselm. This grounding of the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ, made manifest through faith in Christ, establishes for Barth the epistemological foundation by which his Christology is marked from this point forward.<sup>321</sup>

Most of them have completely failed to see that in this book on Anselm I am working with a vital key, if not the key, to an understanding of that whole process of thought that has impressed me more and more in my *Church Dogmatics* as the only one proper to theology.<sup>322</sup>

Barth's book on Anselm was written between *Die Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf* in 1927 at Münster, and the revised first volume of the *Church Dogmatics* in 1932 at Bonn. This is not an insignificant point of historical reference<sup>323</sup> as Barth himself acknowledges that his work on Anselm solidified his Christological thinking with respect to the revelation of God, which in turn confirmed his complete break from any anthropological presupposition in expressing a true Christian doctrine (Anselm: Preface to the Second Edition).<sup>324</sup>

The real document of this farewell is, in truth, not the much-read brochure *Nein!* directed against Brunner in 1934, but rather the book about the evidence for God of Anselm of Canterbury which appeared in 1931. Among all my books I regard this as the one written with the greatest satisfaction... The positive factor in the new development was this: in these years I had to learn that Christian doctrine, if it is to merit its name and if it is to build up the Christian Church in the world as she must needs be built up, has to be exclusively

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God Himself, who is the truth and source of every other truth revealed to humanity through the Word spoken to humanity in Jesus Christ through His Holy Spirit. This can only happen by faith, which is therefore the presupposition of true knowledge. This is the grounding of Barth's theology in concert with Anselm, that faith (*credere*) precedes knowledge (*intelligere*), or stated the other way around; knowledge, by necessity, follows faith (*fides quaerens intellectum*) (cf. Herbert Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction*, pp. 42-44).

<sup>320</sup> Eberhard Busch argues that the delay in Barth's revision of his prolegomena was the result of his paying close attention to 'following through Anselm's method of thought', resulting in his book on Anselm. It was Barth's preoccupation with Anselm that eventually compelled him to start his *Dogmatics* again from the beginning, which found ultimate expression in the *Church Dogmatics* (cf. *Karl Barth*, pp. 205-206).

<sup>321</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum*, Preface to the Second Edition.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> G. C. Berkouwer likewise agrees to the significance of Barth's book on Anselm, which demonstrates a decisive change in Barth's thinking specific to his understanding of the knowledge of God. 'This book, appearing between the Prolegomena of 1927 and the KD from 1932 on, is not an insignificant dogmatic-historical intermezzo. It signifies the Christological concentration taking place in his thought as over against the 'natural' way to the knowledge of God and the way of the *analogia entis* which in 1932 he called an invention of the antichrist (cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 42).

<sup>324</sup> Eberhard Busch argues that 'This book is a detailed explanation of Anselm's formula *fides quaerens intellectum*, which now became the fundamental model for Barth's theological epistemology (cf. *Karl Barth*, p. 206).



and conclusively the doctrine of Jesus Christ – of Jesus Christ as the living Word of God spoken to men.<sup>325</sup>

In Barth's *Anselm* we see the convergence of both ontic and noetic reality in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, where Barth is relentless in driving home Anselm's argument that the presupposition of true knowledge of God flows out of faith in God, who reveals Himself through the truth of His Word. Furthermore, we observe conceptually the ontic substance of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Jesus Christ, who as *truly God* and *truly man* is not simply a union of divine and human natures in the God-man, but more forcefully, the Word of God who took to Himself the true flesh of humanity as the revelation of the truth of God, made manifest by faith.<sup>326</sup>

Moreover, we observe not only a decisive grounding in Barth's Christological development, but also a bridge that leads from his first (and somewhat tentative) appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, to his fuller (and clearly more decisive) development of these terms in the *Church Dogmatics*.<sup>327</sup> Said another way, we see in Barth's *Anselm* the weight of his critical thinking take form in expressing the free grace of God and His movement toward humankind in revealing Himself as *very God* and *very man* in Jesus Christ. Although Barth does not explicitly use the ontological language of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to describe the human nature of *very man* in Christ, *he portrays it* in the knowledge of God, derived from the revelation of God, which is made comprehensible to those in whom He is revealed.<sup>328</sup> Here we recognize the conceptual (but also clear) language of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis

<sup>325</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *How I Changed My Mind*, p. 43.

<sup>326</sup> As George Hunsinger observes 'Dialectic was the instrument of Barth's assault against a fundamental premise of liberalism – namely, its insistence on finding the possibility for talking about God in the subjective conditions of religious experience (regardless of how disciplined by "science") or in some related anthropological phenomenon. Not until his breakthrough in studying Anselm, however, would Barth feel that he had adequately come to display the objective logic alien to liberalism but internal to the Christian faith' (cf. George Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace*, p. 333).

<sup>327</sup> We speak here of the Barth's emphasis in the *Church Dogmatics* that the human nature of Christ is both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, which draws out more forcefully the revelation of God through the reality of human flesh. In this way Barth can say that the flesh of Christ has no subsistent reality in its own being, but nevertheless enjoys the reality of humanity in union (and strictly in union) with the Logos.

<sup>328</sup> Bruce McCormack, who argues that there is no revolutionary thought in Barth's *Anselm*, nevertheless takes notice of Barth's interest in forging a new interpretation of Proslogion 2-4. 'He was thoroughly convinced that what was offered there was not at all a "proof" in the usual sense of the term. One could not rightly apprehend what "proving" meant to Anselm unless one saw chapters 2-4 of the *Proslogion* in the context of his overall theological programme, that is, the way to theological knowledge advocated by Anselm' (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, p. 423).



expressed in Barth's familiar dialectical language of the veiling and unveiling of God, made manifest in the humanity of God. It is therefore not an insignificant statement that Barth makes when he begins the 'Doctrine of God' in the *Church Dogmatics* by explaining:

I believe I learned the fundamental attitude to the problem of the knowledge and existence of God which is adopted in this section—indeed in the whole chapter—at the feet of Anselm of Canterbury, and in particular from his proofs of God set out in Prosl. 2-4.<sup>329</sup>

Barth emphasizes that Anselm does not simply set out to develop a *probare* (proof) of God's existence, but rather, the *intelligere* (knowledge) of God's existence from which this proof is derived.<sup>330</sup> It is in this sense that the knowledge of God becomes a matter of priority for Barth to understand Anselm correctly.<sup>331</sup>

But in point of fact his own particular description of what he is doing is not *probare* at all but *intelligere*. As *intelligere* is achieved it issues in *probare*. Here we can give a general definition: what to prove means is that the validity of certain propositions advocated by Anselm is established over against those who doubt or deny them; that is to say, it means the polemical-apologetic result of *intelligere* (*Anselm*:14).

It is the *intellectus fidei* (knowledge that is issued in faith) that concerns Anselm; it is the knowledge that is 'desired' by faith. Furthermore, the necessary impetus that leads one to this knowledge is the 'desire' of faith; and this desire for knowledge is the desire of belief (*Anselm*:16-17). It is the essence of this faith that proves essential in Barth's analysis of Anselm. It is therefore not merely the 'existence' of faith but the 'nature' of faith in Anselm's thinking

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<sup>329</sup> Cf. *CD* II/1, p. 4.

<sup>330</sup> With respect to Anselm's theology, William Stacey Johnson similarly argues that, 'The overarching rubric in Anselm's theology like that of Augustine, of course, was, "I believe in order to understand": *Credo ut intelligam*. Or put slightly differently, faith seeks intelligibility (*fides quaerens intellectum*), meaning that Anselm's theology starts from "belief" and journeys towards consummate "vision"' (cf. William Stacey Johnson, *The Mystery of God – Karl Barth and the Postmodern Foundations of Theology*, p. 34).

<sup>331</sup> Cf. *Anselm*, p. 14.

that is the focus of Barth's interest here.<sup>332</sup> It is the *Credo ut intelligam* – 'my very faith itself that summons me to knowledge' (*Anselm*:18).<sup>333</sup>

Barth draws out of Anselm's argument an important anthropological understanding with respect to faith; whereas, faith cannot be exercised absent something new encountering (or happening) to us, from outside of us. This is a seed being implanted into our very being that produces something new within us. Furthermore, this seed, which the true believer must receive is the 'Word of God' when it is preached, and heard by us, and is received by us through the grace of God bestowed upon us (*Anselm*:19).<sup>334</sup>

Faith comes by hearing and hearing comes by preaching. Faith is related to the 'Word of Christ' and is not faith if it is not conceived, that is acknowledged and affirmed by the Word of Christ. And the Word of Christ is identical with the 'Word of those who preach Christ'; that means it is legitimately represented by particular human words.<sup>335</sup>

Given the necessity of the Word of God, Barth centers his analysis of *Anselm* based upon the rule that the legitimacy of any theologoumenon must be measured against the veracity of the Scriptures. The Holy Scripture alone is the plumb line, the criterion for determining what theological development is admissible to the Church, and therefore the norm of *intelligere* (understanding) (*Anselm*:33).

There is, however, one criterion which at least determines whether a theologoumenon is admissible or not. This criterion is the text of the Holy Scripture, which according to Anselm forms the basic stability of the Credo to which the *credere* and therefore the *intelligere* refer. While it is the decisive source, it is also the determining norm of the *intelligere*, the *auctoritas veritatis, quam ratio colligit*.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> William Stacey Johnson argues that, 'This subjective appropriation of the faith is a continuing venture, a task (*Aufgabe*), as Barth puts it, and never a given (*Gegeben*). This is because the affirmations expressed in the Creed (*ration fidei*) do not stand in a simple one-for-one correspondence with the unreachable veracity of the gospel truth itself (*ratio veritatis*)' (cf. William Stacy Johnson, *The Mystery of God*, p. 34).

<sup>333</sup> John Thompson recognizes the correlation between the *Credo ut intelligam* and the self giving of Jesus Christ, 'who imparts the knowledge of himself and there is in *a priori* a denial of any secondary source save that which he employs and uses as a further witness' (cf. John Thompson, *Christ in Perspective*, p. 111).

<sup>334</sup> It is the encounter of the free grace of God that makes us the children of God. For Barth this is the message of the Church; that by grace are we redeemed through the power of the Holy Spirit that encounters us. By faith in Christ we become new creatures in Christ. It is therefore through the power of the Holy Spirit that we are able to exercise faith and live in obedience to God through the power of prayer (cf. Marthinus Stephanus van Zyl, *Prayer: the chief exercise of faith – The centrality of prayer in faith and obedience according to Karl Barth*. Ph.D. dissertation. (Stellenbosch University 2013).

<sup>335</sup> Cf. *Anselm*, p. 22.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33.

And just as the Word of God is the measure of all true theology, so also the Word of God – that which is derived outside human capacity for reason – bestows upon human reason, through faith, the true capacity to seek after the knowledge of God.<sup>337</sup> This becomes self evident for Barth as he argues that such knowledge must be sought in prayer, all of which flows out of the grace of God.

The general consideration and also the fact that this grace must ever be sought by prayer already imply that the ultimate and decisive capacity for the *intellectus fidei* does not belong to human reason acting on its own but has always to be bestowed on human reason as surely as *intelligere* is a *voluntaries effectus*.<sup>338</sup>

This *intelligere* of God, which can only break in upon the one who seeks it in prayer and therefore based solely upon the grace of God as encounter is made manifest as God condescends to reveal Himself in this encounter. This is in fact the essence and evidence of God's revelation in this knowledge, as He initiates and moves toward the one to whom He chooses to reveal Himself.<sup>339</sup>

We are already acquainted to some extent with the dialectic in the concept *intelligere*. That there is also an *intelligere esse in re* only *aliquatenus* is not self evident. Even this modified *intelligere* by which man is enabled to see something of the very face of God, has to be sought in prayer for all the right seeking (it also is grace) would be of no avail if God did not 'show' himself, if the encounter with him were not in fact primarily a movement from his side and if the finding that goes with it, the modified *intelligere*, did not take place.<sup>340</sup>

The knowledge, this *intellectus*, which concerns Anselm, is solely derived by faith in the One who chooses to reveal Himself. In this way the knowledge of God, which is incomprehensible based upon human endeavor alone, can never be separated from faith in the One who reveals

<sup>337</sup> In explaining Barth's conception of 'No Knowledge Without Faith' George Hunsinger explains that 'Everything depends, Barth argued, on whether our rational reflection remains bound to the subject matter of revelation. But this subject matter as such is mysterious and elusive... The mystery and miracle of the subject matter find their parallel not only in the conceptual diversity and nonsystematizability of its explication, but also in the miracle and mystery of its mode of rational apprehension' (cf. George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth*, p. 53).

<sup>338</sup> Cf. *Anselm*, p. 37.

<sup>339</sup> Bruce McCormack identifies as the central point in the *Anselm* book the question of what it means to "demonstrate rationality" in theology. That is, we see in Barth's *Anselm* (particularly reading it in light of *CD I/1*, para. 5.4, 'The Speech of God as the Mystery of God') an allusion to the dialectic of veiling and unveiling in revelation. Yet, as McCormack affirms, notwithstanding the benefit of *CD I/1*, 'it is clear enough that the dialectic of veiling and unveiling is the unspoken—and at a few dramatic points, fully articulated—presupposition of the theological method set forth in the *Anselm* book (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, pp. 428-29).

<sup>340</sup> Cf. *Anselm*, pp. 38-39.

Himself.<sup>341</sup> And it is in the recognition and exercise of faith in the incomprehensibility of the object of revelation that, by definition, precludes any concept of self-actualization of this knowledge.

The knowledge, the *intellectus*, with which Anselm is concerned is the *intellectus fidei*. That means that it can consist only of positive meditation on the object of faith. It cannot establish this object of faith as such but rather has to understand it in its very incomprehensibility.<sup>342</sup>

Therefore, it is this incomprehensibility of the nature of God that only can be revealed by God Himself through His Word. This is the begotten Word of God, the Word spoken by God to those whom He chooses to reveal Himself. Ontologically speaking, Barth makes clear that being consubstantial with the Father, this Word is not unlike the Father, but exists as the same substance of the Father, and with the Father. This is the truth of the Father spoken through His Word. This is God moving toward humankind through the revelation of His Word of truth.<sup>343</sup>

Strictly understood the ratio veritatis is identical with the ratio *summae naturae*, that is with the divine Word consubstantial with the Father. It is the ratio of God. It is not because it is ratio that it has truth but because God, Truth has it. This Word is not divine as word, but because it is begotten of the Father—spoken by him.<sup>344</sup>

God's self-revelatory movement toward humankind is presupposed by the ontic necessity of the Word, which fundamentally must precede the noetic necessity. In other words, true knowledge of God is impossible unless the object of that knowledge chooses first (according to His own will) to reveal Himself in a way that can be comprehended, and which in turn can be responded to through the exercise in faith.<sup>345</sup> Therefore, true knowledge of the object of faith presupposes

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<sup>341</sup> Anselm's faith is based upon the object of faith who indeed assumed a human nature in such a way that the person of God and the person of the man were one and the same, which can only occur in the case of the one person of God. 'For it is incomprehensible that different persons be one and the same person with one and the same man' (cf. Anselm of Canterbury, Vol. 3. *The Incarnation of the Word*, p. 27).

<sup>342</sup> Ibid. pp. 39-40.

<sup>343</sup> George Hunsinger employs the concept of 'no neutrality' in describing the understanding of faith. 'The rejection of neutrality was a way not only of doing justice to the subject matter, but also of avoiding the pitfalls of rational orthodoxy (which was typically unable to explain how to integrate the personalist and rationalist dimensions; it was unable to account adequately for the context of personal encounter within which rational reflection in theology was to occur). Neutral understanding was impossible for faith, precisely because faith by definition was self-involving—a living response to a personal encounter with the living God' (cf. George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth*, p. 50).

<sup>344</sup> Cf. Anselm, pp. 45-46.

<sup>345</sup> Douglas R. Sharp similarly identifies the ontic/noetic relationship in Barth's *Anselm*. 'In the act of knowledge, the ontic always precedes the noetic, and behind the noetic *ratio* of the knowing subject stands the ontic *ratio* of the

recognition of the basis that is peculiar to the object of faith itself (*Anselm*:50).<sup>346</sup> Barth concludes that the ‘rational’ knowledge of the object of faith is derived from the object of faith and not *vice versa*. That is, ‘the object of faith and its knowledge are ultimately derived from Truth, that is, from God and from his will’ (*Anselm*:52).<sup>347</sup>

Barth notes at the beginning of the *Proslogion* 2 that Anselm defines his name for God as: *aliquid quo nihil cogitari possit*, which Barth paraphrases as ‘something beyond which nothing greater can be conceived’ (*Anselm*:73-74). Barth also observes that Anselm chooses this name as a way to describe God as something ‘completely independent of whether men in actual fact conceive it or can conceive it’ (*Anselm*:74). Anselm varied this name slightly to be: *Aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari possit*, which added the emphasis of ‘nothing more’ greater can be thought. The point of Anselm’s argument was not a ‘condensed formula’ of the doctrine of God, but a genuine description for the name of God with a view to obtaining a true knowledge of God, a knowledge which must be presumed by the revelation of God from ‘the other source’; that is, from God Himself. Barth notes here that Anselm’s name for God simply demonstrates that there exists between the ‘Name of God’ and the revelation of His existence and nature a ‘strong and discernible connection’ (*Anselm*:75-76).

In this context Barth asks how we know that God is incomprehensible. Anselm simply answers that just like any knowledge or concept of the nature of God, it can only come about by faith.

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known object, both of which are bound in the *ratio Dei*, the Word and truth which is God... The quest for knowledge consists in the drive within faith to go back across the way already traversed in the movement of conformity from the object of faith to the knowledge of faith, from the ontic *ratio* to the knowing of the noetic *ratio* (cf. Douglas R. Sharp, *The Hermeneutics of Election – The Significance of the Doctrine in Barth’s Church Dogmatics*, p. 14).

<sup>346</sup> Barth expresses this quite clearly in the *Church Dogmatics* in ‘The Knowability of the Word of God’, ‘The Word of God become knowable by making itself known. The application of what has been said of the problem of knowledge consists in stopping at this statement and not going a single step beyond it... If we have understood that the knowability of God’s Word is really an inalienable affirmation of faith, but that precisely as such it denotes the miracle of faith, the miracle that we can only recollect and hope for, then as a final necessity we must also understand that man must be set aside and God Himself presented as the original subject, as the primary power, as the creator of the possibility of knowledge of God’s Word. Christ does not remain outside’ (cf. *CD* I/1, p. 247).

<sup>347</sup> We see this rational knowledge of revelation motif clearly expressed in Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, ‘Any reservation, whether against God’s Word being actively present in person, or against the active presence of God in person being here in the flesh in the likeness of man, makes revelation and reconciliation in comprehensible. And *vice versa*, the more definitely the two are seen to be one, the Word of God—flesh, or God Himself in person—the likeness of man, the better is our realisation of what the Bible calls revelation’ (cf. *CD* I/2, p. 148).

Faith therefore is the prime requisite to any understanding of the nature of God.<sup>348</sup> And so it is by faith that Anselm is able to ‘recognize’ a name for God:

...a designation for God which is not totally inadequate, not just a symbol, etc., for the simple reason that it expresses nothing about the nature of God but rather lays down a rule of thought which, if we follow it, enables us to endorse the statement about the nature of God accepted in faith (example, the statement of his incomprehensibility) as our own necessary thoughts.<sup>349</sup>

Barth explains that it is not Anselm’s intent to conceive a name for God that reveals Him in a way that is incomprehensible (not *in altitudine sua*), but rather, ‘by conceiving the manner in which he is not to be conceived’. That is, God is not to be conceived in a way that anything greater than him could be imagined or conceivable. This is ruled out by the revelation / faith relationship to Him (*Anselm*:83). Furthermore, the deciding factor with respect to the reality of God’s existence and our ability to truly conceive of Him is based upon the decisive truth of God Himself (*Anselm*:97).<sup>350</sup>

Barth draws Anselm’s proof to its critical point arguing that because God is the object of knowledge; the only being whose existence is necessary, and who surrenders Himself to knowledge through His own self-revelation, through faith, there is every reason to prove that which is believed by faith (*Anselm*:100).<sup>351</sup> Furthermore, Anselm does this quite literally as he

<sup>348</sup> Gary W. Deddo argues well that Barth rejected the traditional Scholastic scheme of asking in order: How do we know God? Does God exist? What is God? Who is God? Barth understands that God’s self-revelation of the triune God in the person of Jesus Christ brush these questions aside in view of the biblical witness. The knowledge of God comes about through the Triune God’s own initiative (cf. Gary W. Deddo, *Karl Barth’s Theology of Relations – Trinitarian, Christological, and Human: Towards an Ethic of the Family*, pp. 18-19). In Barth’s thinking, the priority of God’s grace in the knowledge of a triune God, through faith as bestowed by the power of the Holy Spirit, does not escape our notice here.

<sup>349</sup> Cf. *Anselm*, p. 80.

<sup>350</sup> Barth states that ‘Without faith we will definitely remain satisfied with the delimitation which we allotted ourselves. And the lack of seriousness in this delimitation will probably be betrayed in two ways. We shall ascribe to ourselves a capacity for the knowledge of God in opposition to the revelation of God. And we shall, therefore, treat God’s revelation as something which stands at our own disposal, instead of perceiving that the capacity to know God is taken away from us by revelation and can be ascribed to us again only by revelation’ (cf. *CD II/1*, p. 184).

<sup>351</sup> In the *Church Dogmatics* Barth cites Anselm as coming closest the mark in describing the hiddenness of God ‘on the one hand as the predicate to the glory of God present to man, and on the other in its relationship to the sinful closeness of man against this God present to him’. Barth then further expounds, ‘We thus understand the assertion of the hiddenness of God as the confession of the truth and the effectiveness of the sentence of the judgment which in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is pronounced upon man and therefore also upon his viewing and conceiving, dispossessing him of his own possibility of realising the knowledge of the God who encounters him, and leaving him only the knowledge of faith granted to him and demanded of him by the grace of God and therefore only the viewing and conceiving of faith’ (cf. *CD II/1*, p. 191).



speaks about God by *speaking to God*. Barth in fact understands Anselm's theological inquiry to be undertaken and made through prayer (Anselm:150).

The knowledge which the proof seeks to expound and impart is the knowledge that is peculiar to faith, knowledge of what is believed from what is believed. It is—a knowledge that must be bestowed on man.<sup>352</sup>

In view of the incomprehensibility of God's nature, Barth uses language familiar to the *Göttingen Dogmatics* of God's *veiling*, which can only be transformed into a *unveiling*, an intelligible comprehension, as it touches us noetically from the outside as a subject made known to us (Anselm:116). It is Anselm's faith, and his faith alone, that guides this course of inquiry. All doubt of human reason is buried under the ground of his obedience by faith, which for him is 'assent to a decision coming from its object', from the Lord's own communication of Himself (Anselm:151). Anselm's faith is substantiated through God's revelation of Himself, who exists in truth, and as such, can in no way be conceived as not existing (Anselm:152). Furthermore, Anselm ascribes to his own faith in God, the God who wills to reveal Himself, not based upon any merit of his own, but strictly upon the work of God's grace alone (Anselm:160).<sup>353</sup>

God gave Himself as the object of his knowledge and God illumined him that he might know him as object. Apart from this event there is no proof of the existence, that is of the reality of God. But in the power of this event there is a proof which is worthy of gratitude. It is truth that has spoken and not man in search of faith.<sup>354</sup>

We find in the *Church Dogmatics* a direct connection from *Anselm* to Barth's emphasis on the grace of God realized by faith that emerges from the cleavage between reason in search of God, and the Word of God that is revealed in a way 'intrinsically and independently native to him'. In the revelation of God humanity is encountered by something new, something humankind cannot achieve on its own (*CD I/1:194*). Faith confronts humankind from the outside in, and is strictly dependent upon the revelation of God through His Word (*CD I/1:213*).

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<sup>352</sup> Cf. Anselm, p. 102.

<sup>353</sup> Barth uses Anselm's language to express ontically and noetically the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as the mode of God's self revelation. As Barth explains in the *Church Dogmatics*, 'This man Jesus Christ is identical with God because the Word became flesh... Therefore He does not only live through God and with God. He is Himself God. Nor is He autonomous and self-existent. His reality, existence and being is wholly and absolutely that of God Himself, the God who acts in His Word. His manhood is only the predicate of His Godhead, or better or more concretely, it is only the predicate, assumed in inconceivable condescension, of the Word acting upon us, The Word who is the Lord' (cf. *CD I/2*, p. 162).

<sup>354</sup> Cf. *Anselm*, p. 171.



Faith—we could no longer avoid the term at the end of our deliberation on experience in the third sub-section—is the making possible of knowledge of God’s Word that takes place in actual knowledge of it.<sup>355</sup>

True faith rests upon the will and work of God as a real event (πιστις), based upon the proclamation of Christ, which in turn makes the knowledge of God a reality (CD I/1:229). Therefore, the knowledge *of* God and faith *in* God are inexorably intertwined as ‘God Himself or Christ is at once the object, meaning, empowering and measure of the real knowledge of God and yet this does not cease to be a wholly concrete act performed by men and experience by men’ (CD I/1:229).

For faith, He is and remains enclosed in objectivity, in the externality of the Word of God, in Jesus Christ. He must teach man to seek Him and He must show Himself to him in order that he may find Him. But it is by this external object that Christian faith lives.<sup>356</sup>

This becomes the nexus of revelation and faith, which finds expression in the *Church Dogmatics*, as first grounded in Barth’s *Anselm*. Barth can now say more emphatically that the one who exercises faith does not first adopt faith (so as to create it in oneself), but only as it has been granted to him through the Word of God (CD I/1:244). Ontically, the revelation of God is manifest in its real comprehensiveness through the Word of God, and noetically, received by faith in the object of the Word that has spoken.<sup>357</sup>

But let us come to the point: The basis or root of the doctrine of the Trinity, if it has one and is thus legitimate dogma—and it does have one is thus legitimate dogma—lies in revelation.<sup>358</sup>

We conclude by arguing that the importance of Barth’s book on *Anselm* is not that it provides revolutionary insights into, or changes to, Barth’s theological method. But given the backdrop of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, the veiling and unveiling of God is now grounded both ontically and noetically in Jesus Christ as the revelation of God. Moreover, it is faith in the revealed Christ

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<sup>355</sup> Cf. CD I/1, p.28.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid. p. 232.

<sup>357</sup> Dawn DeVries argues that for Barth, ‘Faith is secondary – it is a response or a reflex, not a creative or generative human activity.’ Faith for Barth is a ‘reflexive’ action, which requires a prior presence who is the Lord Jesus Christ. ‘The fact that faith takes its origin in a relationship that is prior to it and apart from which it could not exist at all means that believing Christians can no longer imagine themselves to be self-determined individuals. In faith, they recognize this for the illusion that it is (cf. Dawn DeVries, ‘Barth on the Object and Act of Faith’ in *The Reality of Faith in Theology – Studies on Karl Barth Princeton-Kampen Consultation 2005*, pp. 165-166).

<sup>358</sup> Cf. CD I/1, p. 311.

that engenders the capacity for the true knowledge of God.<sup>359</sup> This sets the stage for Barth's more expansive expression of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Church Dogmatics* as a congruent ontological model of Christ's human nature.

#### 4.4 Ἐγένετο: The 'Word Became Flesh' as Anhypostasis *and* Enhypostasis in Karl Barth's Christology

If it were indeed possible to encapsulate Karl Barth's understanding of the revelation of God into a single word, one would not be lax in suggesting: ἐγένετο, where God's covenant to reconcile humanity to Himself finds tangible expression, as a *completed event*, in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>360</sup> Furthermore, as a completed event, the self-revelation of God must also be viewed as a historical reality.<sup>361</sup> As such, Barth interprets as a matter of theological course any denial of the historicity Jesus Christ to be a rejection of the ontological basis of His being; a being that walked and breathed and lived upon this earth as a *true man*.<sup>362</sup> The reality of Jesus Christ is an objective fact, which in the event of the ἐγένετο gives Christology its ontological reference (*CD* I/2:165).<sup>363</sup>

<sup>359</sup> Stephen Wigley argues that the significance of Barth's study of Anselm lays in the structure of the *Church Dogmatics*, particularly in relation to how it is that the name of God is revealed to Anselm; that is, in faith and in response to prayer. Wigley further argues that this affects Barth's approach to epistemology and leads to his trinitarian exposition of revelation in the 'Doctrine of the Word of God' (cf. Stephen D. Wigley, *Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar – A Critical Engagement*, p. 139). While we do not disagree with Wigley's argument, we add that this faith, which presupposes Barth's epistemology, finds its center in the event of God's revelation in Jesus Christ as event where the hiddenness of God is revealed in the humanity of Christ. Barth walks away from his study of Anselm with a deeper understanding of the humanity of Christ in union with the Logos as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

<sup>360</sup> For Barth, the ἐγένετο, the incarnation of the Word, this *unio hypostatica*, must be understood as a *completed event*, but also as a completed *event*. That is, the New Testament testifies to the reality of Jesus Christ as an accomplished fact, 'that in the fullness of time it came true—and it was this that made this time fulfilled time' (cf. *CD* I/2, p. 165).

<sup>361</sup> For Barth, there is no theology without the 'immediacy of the eternal omnipresent Word and Spirit of God, in which its *freedom* is based, the freedom of the faith bound to God.' This is the mediated presence of revelation (cf. Karl Barth, 'Church and Theology' in *Theology and Church*, p. 286).

<sup>362</sup> The reality of Jesus Christ in the flesh was never a question for Barth, as evidenced by his reading of the Gospel accounts as reliable witnesses to the life of Jesus. But the focus of Barth's attention was the revelation of God in the person of Christ. David Mueller argues that in view of Barth's reading of the Gospels as kerygmatic witness, it is not possible to isolate bits and pieces into a historical reconstruction, separating them from the reality of revelation, and designate them as 'the simple gospel' (cf. David Mueller, *Foundation of Karl Barth's Doctrine of Reconciliation*, p. 68).

<sup>363</sup> Responding to criticism that Barth's incarnation theology negates the historical Jesus, William P. Anderson asks: Does the sole criteria for discussing the incarnation depend strictly upon the study of the life of an historical phenomenon. Barth does not seem to think so. The position that Barth takes, however, does not abandon the gospel records. On the contrary, Barth emphasizes the Easter message and faith, and also holds to the position that the

But how is this reality made manifest ontologically in Jesus Christ? Barth's answer centers on the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature through which God reveals Himself in the flesh of humanity as the very speech of God. It is the event of the 'Word becoming flesh' that this mystery is revealed as a reality.<sup>364</sup>

Understanding the Word of God not as proclamation and Scripture alone but as God's revelation in proclamation and Scripture, we must understand it in its identity with God Himself. God's revelation is Jesus Christ, the Son of God (*CD* I/1:137).

In view of God's revelation made manifest as the 'Word became flesh' we will examine the ontological relationship of ἐγένετο to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature given two separate, but integrated contexts of Barth's Christology: (1) Barth's exegesis of the ἐγένετο in his lectures on John 1 and, (2) Barth's development of the ἐγένετο in the *Church Dogmatics*.<sup>365</sup>

#### Ἐγένετο in John 1:14

Karl Barth lectured on the gospel of John at Münster in 1925 and 1926, and then at Bonn in 1933.<sup>366</sup> But it is Barth's exegesis of ἐγένετο, the 'Word became flesh' as expressed in verse 1:14 that concerns us here. Although Barth does not specifically refer to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in his lectures on John 1, we observe in his exegesis of ἐγένετο a clear synthesis of these concepts where he develops the eternal Word of God as actually 'becoming', but a becoming that can only be understood as a paradox.

The paradox is harsh and clear: ho logos egeneto, the Word became, it was there. The concreteness, the contingency, the historical singularity of the eternal, absolute, divine

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Easter message and the passion of our Lord, i.e., the entire life of Jesus, is the concrete content of the revelation which takes place at Easter (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 124-125).

<sup>364</sup> Todd Pokrifka rightly argues that the charge of Barth's 'Christocentrism' in reality speaks to Barth's Trinitarian theology. To speak of Christ and His incarnation as the center of Scripture presupposes a Trinitarian understanding of God, because in Jesus Christ is made manifest the revelation of the Triune God (cf. Todd Pokrifka, *Redescribing God*, pp. 185-186).

<sup>365</sup> For Barth, the 'Word became flesh' is central to his theology, which is the reality and life of Christ. Likewise, Charles Hodge clearly affirms that Reformed and true Christianity is not a system of doctrine, nor is it subjectively considered a form of knowledge. 'It is a life. It is the life of Christ...The effect of the incarnation was to unite the human and divine as one life' (cf. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*. Vol. I. p. 174).

<sup>366</sup> While at Münster and Bonn, Barth was given the freedom to teach dogmatics and New Testament exegesis from which his exegetical work on the Gospel of John emerged (cf. Karl Barth, *Witness to the Word*, Preface, pp. ix-x).

Word is what is stated with this sentence, and to understand John we must take away nothing on either side.<sup>367</sup>

Barth's emphasis that the 'Word became' does not point to a 'coming into being' as a creature (although He did in His humanity), but to the paradoxical reality that in the ἐγένετο the Logos came in the flesh of humanity (*John* 1:87).

The paradox of the statement in v. 14 is not that he *came* into the world, for this was said already in v. 9, but that he came in this way, in the flesh.<sup>368</sup>

This reality, however, is not simply the Logos assuming humanity, but His assuming the nature of fallen humanity in need of sanctification and redemption. Although Barth acknowledges Christ's becoming includes the assumption of human nature in general (i.e., the assumption of an individual human substance of soul and body), this is not where the emphasis lies, but rather in the fact that it is the 'humilis misera ac infirma hominis conditio' to which the eternal Word gave itself. The Logos therefore did not simply assume humanity as originally intended by God before the fall, but humanity that was subject to the corruption of the human image.

But John speaks explicitly of becoming flesh, of assuming the nature of Adam, of the servant form which is proper to human nature under the sign of the fall and in the sphere of darkness, of the fallen and corrupt human nature which needs to be sanctified and redeemed.<sup>369</sup>

Barth understands that this must be so because humanity's salvation depended upon Jesus becoming flesh in our fallen state. Otherwise, His becoming would only heighten our pain. But as it is, He chose to bear the body of our weakness in solidarity with our flesh (*John* 1:88-89).<sup>370</sup> In this paradox is embodied the function of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis where the eternal and perfect Logos assumes to Himself that which is not like Himself, but in so doing He sanctifies it, He takes that which was not real and makes it real; that is, true human nature.

Furthermore, it is not simply that the Word became flesh, but 'the Word became *flesh* is its revelation' (*John* 1:90). That is, the flesh of humanity becomes the mode of the revelation of God. In this way the *egeneto* is 'the sign equating *ho logos* and *sarx*', an equation that cannot be

<sup>367</sup> Cf. Karl Barth *John* 1, p. 86.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid. p. 87.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid. p. 88.

<sup>370</sup> Barth cites Heman Bezzel in his development of Christ and His assumption of the flesh of humankind.

reversed. The Logos always remains the subject and *sarx* the predicate because the Logos remains what He is without this predicate of the *sarx* (*John* 1:90).<sup>371</sup> Barth emphasizes here the superiority of the Word over the flesh in their union, and conceptually expresses the language of *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* in the flesh of Christ through the action of the Word.

The *Word* speaks, the *Word* acts, the *Word* reveals, the *Word* redeems. The *Word* is Jesus, the I that will alone speak for long stretches later in the Gospel. Certainly the *incarnate Word*.<sup>372</sup>

Barth further expresses the idea of *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* by arguing that in the assumption of flesh by the Logos, He in no way ceases to be the Son in every respect in this paradoxical union of two unequal things (*John* 1:91). The flesh, the instrument of revelation assumed by the Logos as event is the Word in action. This is God in the flesh revealing that which is not flesh. Therefore, the revelation of God in Jesus is strictly the action of the Logos assuming flesh. Furthermore, it is the flesh that conceals, and it is the Logos Himself who is revealed through the flesh (*John* 1:92).<sup>373</sup> For Barth, that the Word became flesh not only expresses the revelation of God in the flesh of humanity, but it forms the ontological mold into which the *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* of Christ's human nature is formed.

### Church Dogmatics

The revelation of the Triune God made manifest by the Logos in the flesh of Jesus Christ is a dominant theme expressed by Karl Barth in the *Church Dogmatics*. Negatively stated, the biblical witness to the incarnation of the Word does not mean that the man Jesus of Nazareth, in Himself, in His own power, is the revealing Word of God.<sup>374</sup> The humanity of Christ (in His

<sup>371</sup> As expressed in the *Church Dogmatics* Barth states, 'But can or will the Word of God become? Does He not surrender thereby His divinity? Or, if He does not surrender it, what does becoming mean? By what figures of speech or concepts is this becoming of the Word of God to be properly described? "The Word became" – if that is true, and true in such a way that a real becoming is thereby expressed without the slightest surrender of the divinity of the Word, its truth is that of a miraculous act, an act of mercy on the part of God' (cf. *CD* I/2, p. 159).

<sup>372</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *John* 1, p. 91.

<sup>373</sup> Again this language is expressed within the context of *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* in the *Church Dogmatics*. 'As the Word of God becomes flesh He assumes or adopts or incorporates human being into unity with His divine being, so that this human being, as it comes into being, becomes as a human being the being of the Word of God' (cf. *CD* I/2, p. 160).

<sup>374</sup> Eberhard Jüngel argues that Barth's concept of the revelation of God always carries with it the objectivity of His revelation. 'According to Barth, we have to speak of God's 'primary objectivity', because in the objectivity of his revelation, in which he lets himself be known to men, *God reveals himself as the Lord*...the category of lordship of God expresses the *capacity* for revelation, the *possibility* of revelation which is grounded in the being of God' (cf. Eberhard Jüngel, *God's Being is in Becoming*, pp 62-63).

humanness) is not the revelation of God, but the Logos as revealed through the human flesh of Jesus (*CD I/1:323*).<sup>375</sup>

Furthermore, Jesus Christ is not simply the revelation of the Logos, but the revelation of the Triune God. Barth therefore concludes that ‘revelation must indeed be understood as the root or ground of the doctrine of the Trinity’ (*CD I/1:332*).<sup>376</sup> This must be so because the Triune God does not act in isolation as the Father, Son, or Spirit but always as one God. Moreover, Barth argues that while God reveals Himself given the ‘attributes’ of His triune being, He cannot be ‘distributed ontologically to Father, Son and Spirit’ (*CD I/1:362*).<sup>377</sup> Therefore, Barth can say: ‘The statement that it is the Word or the Son who became man therefore asserts without reserve that in spite of His distinction as Son from the Father and the Holy Spirit, God in His entire divinity became man’ (*CD I/2:33*).<sup>378</sup>

Barth argues that Jesus Christ reveals in His life and work the Triune God – *as a creature*. But He is not only a creature; otherwise, He could not reveal God. If, however, He reveals God despite His creatureliness, then He must also be God. In this sense He must be ‘full and true God without reduction or limitation, without more or less. Any such restriction would not merely weaken His deity; it would deny it’. Therefore, as the revelation of His Father, Jesus Christ is equal in deity with His Father (*CD I/1:406*).

This can, of course, be said of the human nature of Christ, of His existence as a man in which, according to Scripture, He meets us as the Revealer of God and the Reconciler to God. But it cannot be said of Him who here assumes human nature, of Him who exists as man (“for us men” as Nic. Const. says later) but does not allow His being and essence to

<sup>375</sup> Bruce McCormack argues (from *CD II/1:201* par. 27) ‘Revelation is, for Barth, a rational event, that is, one that occurs in the realm of human *ratio* through the normal process of human cognition.’ McCormack explains that God’s speech communicates reason with reason and person with person. The divine communication with human reason must be understood as a rational event. And as a rational event, the speech of God’s revelation is a trinitarian event. Barth claims that the ‘Word of God (Jesus Christ, the objective reality and possibility of revelation) is intrinsically verbal—his person is a content-ful reality that is communicable in views, concepts, and words’ (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Orthodox and Modern – Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 168-169).

<sup>376</sup> John Thompson similarly points out: ‘Barth’s view of the Trinity is that one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the divine freedom and love lives a life complete in itself, though this is only known in and through the incarnation’ (cf. John Thompson, *Christ in Perspective – Christological Perspectives in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 21).

<sup>377</sup> Barth notes ‘It is thus legitimate for us to differentiate the three modes of being of the one God on the basis of the revelation which takes place in the sphere and within the limits of human comprehensibility’ (*CD I/1:372*).

<sup>378</sup> Barth would also later state that ‘It is precisely God’s *deity*, which rightly understood, includes his *humanity*.’ For Barth, rightly understood means that this is a Christological statement (cf. Karl Barth, *The Humanity of God*, p. 46). John Thompson observes that consistent with traditional dogmatics (i.e. Heinrich Heppe) Barth posits that while the Son alone in His nature as God became a man, in His union with the Trinity the incarnation is a common work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (cf. John Thompson, *Christ in Perspective*, p. 22).



be exhausted or imprisoned in His humanity, who is also in the full sense *not* man in this humanity, who is the Revealer and Reconciler in His humanity by virtue of that wherein He is not man. He who becomes man here to become the Revealer and the Reconciler is not made. Otherwise revelation and reconciliation would be an event within creation and, since creation is the world of fallen man, they would be a futile event. Because the One who here became man is God, God in this mode of being, therefore, and not otherwise, His humanity is effective as revelation and reconciliation.<sup>379</sup>

The Revelation of God manifested in the incarnation of the Word directs us to the content of the New Testament that is ‘solely the name Jesus Christ’ in the truth of His ‘God-manhood’ (*CD* I/2:15). That is, Jesus Christ is expressed by the New Testament witnesses as the revelation of God – the ‘true God man’ and the ‘true man God’ as their penultimate word. Their ultimate word, however, is not a synthesis of these terms, but simply the name Jesus Christ (*CD* I/2:24). Moreover, when the Word (in union with the Father and Holy Spirit) became humanity, He put on humanity as the covering, the means of His revelation (*CD* I/2:35), manifested as both the veiling and unveiling of Himself. For Barth, this is the biblical sense of revelation, namely the ‘veiledness of the Word of God in Him and the breaking through of this veil in virtue of His self-unveiling’ (*CD* I/2:56).<sup>380</sup>

This unveiling is in fact the act of God revealing Himself in the time of the years 1-30, the fulfilled time when revelation becomes history (*CD* I/2:58).<sup>381</sup> This is the time of grace, the crisis that breaks into earthly time. This is where the offense of God’s revelation confronts humankind in becoming the end of our time in its imminence (*CD* I/2:67). This is the reality of the revelation

<sup>379</sup> In this somewhat confusing passage Barth alludes to the paradox of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis made manifest in the human nature of Christ as the revealer of God. While the flesh assumed by the Logos is real humanity in its mode of being, it is also not real humanity as the Logos who assumed this flesh. Therefore, as anhypostasis, the flesh of Christ has no autonomous existence (having not been created), but is also enhypostasis, having been taken up into the eternal Logos through which the flesh assumes real existence (Cf. Karl Barth *CD* I/1, p.430).

<sup>380</sup> Barth’s Trinitarian language of the incarnation echoes that of Herman Bavinck’s *Dogmatics*: ‘The Doctrine of Christ is the central point of the whole system of dogmatics. Here too, pulses the whole of the religious-ethical life of Christianity. Christ, the incarnate Word, is thus the central fact of the entire history of the world. The incarnation has its presupposition and foundation in the trinitarian being of God. The Trinity makes possible the existence of a mediator who himself participates both in the divine and human nature and thus unites God and humanity. The incarnation, however, is the Work of the entire Trinity. Christ was sent by the Father and conceived by the Holy Spirit... The Logos, who was with God and by whom all things were made, is the One who became flesh’ (cf. Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Sin and Salvation in Christ, Vol. 3. p.235).

<sup>381</sup> Thomas F. Torrance almost whimsically asks: where there is no formal establishment of time with respect to eschatology, must we not go on to form a concept of time in the analogy of the incarnation? ‘Must we not say with Karl Barth that because the Word has become flesh it has also become time’ (cf. T. F. Torrance, *Atonement – The Person and Work of Christ*, p. 409).



of God made manifest in the Word, the Son taking upon Himself the burden, and in fact becoming flesh (*CD I/2:89*).<sup>382</sup> In all of this Barth can state quite emphatically that:

Every statement in the New Testament originates in the fact that the Word was made flesh (*CD I/2:104*).

However, Barth counters that we cannot fully conceive that the Word was made flesh in the fullness of its reality. That the eternal Word of God assumed human nature into ‘oneness’ with Himself in becoming ‘very God and very man’ signifies the ultimate mystery of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ (*CD I/2:124*). In this mystery resides ‘this being of man in its unity and in its totality that was meant when it spoke of the ‘human nature’ in Christ; and, on the other hand, the divine being in its unity and in its totality, when it spoke of the ‘divine nature’ in Christ’ (*CD I/2:128*).

In the ἐγένετο, this ‘oneness’ of Jesus Christ as ‘very God and very man’ is formed the center of reality and mystery in the revelation of Jesus Christ. This objective reality of Christ’s advent, however, does not in itself fully reveal ontologically what takes place in the ἐγένετο.<sup>383</sup> This is the mystery that the Church proclaims in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This is the eternal Logos assuming the flesh of humanity without infringing upon the ontological reality of His being as eternal God in the Second Person of the Trinity. Moreover, this is the eternal message expressed in the time and space of this world both to the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, and more fully realized in the church of the New Testament.

The Christian message declares that in this form, as the Logos incarnatus, He exists in the recollection of the Church, exactly as in this form, as the Logos *incarnandus*, He existed for the patriarchs in the expectation of Israel. To that extent it is the message that the incarnation of the Word is an accomplished event. From this point of view it is the answer to the Pauline-Johannine problem. Is the name of Christ, is Christ the Son of God,

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<sup>382</sup> Bruce McCormack similarly states in his exposition of *CD I/2* (especially pages 159-71) that: ‘when God unites himself to human nature in the incarnation, God does so in such a way that no abrogation, abolition, or alteration of that nature takes place. The human nature is *human* precisely in its union with the divine. As such, it remains a veil even as God unveils himself to human eyewitnesses in and through it—by the testimony of the Holy Spirit to them. Hence the subject of this human life is never given to direct perception. What the disciples apprehend of *themselves* is therefore the humanity of Jesus and it alone’ (cf. Bruce McCormack, *Orthodox and Modern – Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 171).

<sup>383</sup> Barth is careful to not over simplify the ontological mystery of Christ’s advent. Bromiley notes here that with Barth’s understanding of this ontological reality of the ἐγένετο with respect to, ‘was made’ or ‘became,’ the verb between the Word and flesh, points to the central mystery (cf. Geoffrey Bromiley, *Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 25).

really Jesus of Nazareth? Yes, it replies; and so with all its might it must maintain that this and no other is His name, that such He is and not something else.<sup>384</sup>

In view of Barth's emphasis that Christ is in fact Jesus of Nazareth, it is not difficult to appreciate the importance of the ontological grounding provided by the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, where the reality of the ἐγένετο carries with it the true mystery of the person of Jesus Christ. That is, while Jesus Christ is in fact *true man*, this is possible ontologically only as a being enhypostasis in union with the Logos, a union from which Jesus (as *true man*) derives His actual subsistence. On the other hand, as anhypostasis, the negative (without subsistence) component of Christ's human nature provides a rather unique frame of ontological reference by which the mystery of the ἐγένετο can be made cognitive only in this Christological context.<sup>385</sup>

The miracle of the incarnation, of the unio hypostatica, is seen from this angle when we realize that the Word of God descended from the freedom, majesty and glory of His divinity, that without becoming unlike Himself He assumed His likeness to us, and that now He is to be sought and found of us here, namely, in His human being.<sup>386</sup>

Anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis therefore express Christ's human nature dialectically in God's veiling and unveiling. This understanding of Christ's human nature explains how Jesus Christ reveals Himself to His creation 'as one with them', yet also unchanged as their creator in His divine essence. Taking this concept one step further, Barth understands in this dialectic of veiling and unveiling that Christ must be the revelation of God both ontically and noetically,<sup>387</sup> because the knowledge of God made manifest in Christ, His being as humanity alone, does not accomplish true revelation of the triune God. Put another way, if the revelation of Jesus Christ is

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<sup>384</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 165.

<sup>385</sup> William P. Anderson argues that the ontological problem in Barth's concept of the humanity of Christ is the human condition is 'expurgated' by the flesh-assumption of the Word so that the subjective is swallowed up in this event of the Word taking human nature upon Himself, that is, in the objective. Anderson suggests that true humanity has been removed, becoming purely instrumental in Christ (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, 1981:131). Barth of course would respond to this argument in his appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis where the flesh of Christ is both real and not real humanity in union with the Logos.

<sup>386</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 165.

<sup>387</sup> George Hunsinger suggests that Barth understands the human nature of Christ simply as a (sacramental) sign to the reality of God in Jesus Christ: 'What confronts us directly, therefore, is not the reality but the sacramental sign, not the divine but the creaturely form of objectivity, not the deity but the humanity of Christ. The distinction of the creator from the creature has not been renounced ontically, but it has been surrendered, in any direct sense, noetically. That is, the distinction of the creator from the creature is not visible but concealed by the very different objectivity of the creature' (cf. George Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace – Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 80). We argue that noetically Barth understands the human nature of Christ to also reveal His divine essence, but only through the exercise of faith.

not realized both ontically and noetically through the exercise of faith, it is not the revelation of God as the union of very God and very man.<sup>388</sup> This is the lesson Barth that learned from Anselm.

Viewed through the lenses of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis Jesus of Nazareth is indeed *true man* (debunking any docetic claim) who is the Logos. This is the man Jesus of Nazareth who is assumed by the Logos of God, which is so ingrained in Barth's ontology of Jesus Christ that he has no inherent reason to repeatedly reiterate this principle (or doctrine as he referred to it) in his Christology. This is especially true in the *Church Dogmatics* – the principal theological work by which he is judged. For Barth, the reality of Jesus Christ as a *true man* is axiomatic, just as He is *true God* in His assumption of flesh as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.<sup>389</sup>

Every question concerning the Word which is directed away from Jesus of Nazareth, the human being of Christ, is necessarily and wholly directed away from Himself, the Word, and therefore from God Himself, because the Word, and therefore God Himself, does not exist for us apart from the human being of Christ.<sup>390</sup>

While it may be argued that Barth does not express the humanity of Christ as *true man* 'historically', this does not negate Barth's emphasis of *true man* as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the flesh of Christ.<sup>391</sup> For Barth, it is the act of creation itself that demonstrates the true humanity of Christ, because absent the will of the Father in begetting the Son of God as true man in the ἐγένετο, the creation of the first human being in Adam is meaningless.

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<sup>388</sup> Hunsinger argues that Barth denies the humanity of Christ as being God. 'The truth of God's identity, as mediated in Jesus Christ, remains hidden in the midst of revelation, not only (as we have seen) by virtue of its form, but also by virtue of its content. It remains hidden by virtue of its form, because its form is the form of that which is not God, the creaturely form of Jesus Christ's humanity. It remains hidden by virtue of its content, on the other hand, because its content is the truth of the inconceivable content that God's inmost identity is trinitarian' (cf. Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace – Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 81). Yet as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, in the ἐγένετο, the humanity of Christ is absolutely assumed by the Logos by virtue of this union. Barth in no way separates the humanity of Christ from the divinity of Christ. That would be a denial of his Christology.

<sup>389</sup> Speaking to criticism of the reality of a historical Jesus in Barth's Christology, William P. Anderson agrees that while Barth does not seem to be enamoured by the Jesus of history, one must keep in mind the historical events that helped to shape the thought of Barth, specifically his perception of liberal Protestant theology failure to deal with the limitations of man and the greatness of God. He does not proceed via a Jesus of History but proceeds from the presupposition of the Christological dogma, i.e., from the revelation of God in Jesus Christ (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, 1981, p.124).

<sup>390</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 166.

<sup>391</sup> Describing the historical development of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis Barth states, 'We have seen earlier that what the eternal Word made His own, giving it thereby His own existence, was not a man, but man's nature, man's being, and so not a second existence but a second possibility of existence, to wit, that of a man' (cf. *CD I/2*, p. 163).

Moreover, it is in Barth's understanding of the unity of true God and true man that demonstrates his faithfulness not only to Chalcedon, but to Calvin as well. Barth points to Calvin and says:

Calvin calls Christ prior to His incarnation the eternal Word before all time, begotten of the Father, true God, of one essence, power, and majesty with the Father, and therefore Himself Jehovah, that is, the self-existent one... As the incarnate Word Christ is both true God and true Man. The natures remain distinct, but are in mutual communication, so that we can predicate the qualities to each of the other. The Church is redeemed by the blood of God, the Son of Man is in heaven. This is the familiar doctrine of the *idiomata* ("attributes"), and it was the part of the early teaching that Calvin found it necessary to appeal to most.<sup>392</sup>

Furthermore, the very act of God's creation is accomplished with a view to the incarnation, to the Word becoming flesh. This in fact becomes the historical context in which Barth considers the *very man* of Jesus Christ.

He is both true God and true man. And "true" does not mean only that He is man as God created him, but also that He is this as we all are, and that He is therefore accessible and knowable to us as man, with no special capacities or potentialities, with no admixture of a quality alien to us, with no supernatural endowment such as must make Him a totally different being from us. He is man in such a way that He can be the natural Brother of any other man.<sup>393</sup>

And as the Brother of any other man,

...in the doing of the work of God, and therefore in His oneness of being with God, that He is Himself, this man. It is in this way that He exists as a creature, which cannot be dissolved in its Creator, which cannot itself be or become the Creator, but which has its own reality and worth in face of the Creator, deriving its own righteousness from the Creator.<sup>394</sup>

To the question: How can humanity in his humiliation possibly meet God in His exaltation?

Barth responds: Only in the union of *true man* in his humiliation and *true God* in His exaltation in the person of Jesus Christ, the God-man, who in His divine essence assumes to Himself true human essence. Barth describes this veiling and unveiling of God in Jesus Christ as the two coherent steps inseparably linked, and yet remaining clearly distinct as *very God* and *very man*.

<sup>392</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *The Theology of John Calvin*, p. 328.

<sup>393</sup> Cf. *CD* III/2, p. 53.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.* p. 64.

While the New Testament speaks wholly from the standpoint of Easter and ascension, let us be quite clear that Easter and ascension as such constitute the end and the goal of its witness, to which we are led by a definite way. To begin with, we are set a riddle. From the very start we are also shown that the solution of it is to hand. But it is still a riddle which is followed by the solution. Man in his humiliation, God in His exaltation, or the God-Man in His veiling and also in His unveiling: these constitute two coherent steps, inseparably linked yet also clearly distinct. Some sort of meeting between God and man takes place in the figure of Christ in the New Testament, and in this meeting is the event which is the object of the New Testament witness, *vere Deus vere homo*.<sup>395</sup>

Furthermore, the act of the ἐγένετο is not limited to the incarnation, but points forward to the crucifixion and resurrection of the God-man, all of which encompass the revelation of God made comprehensible in the person of Jesus Christ as the flesh of God Himself (as the shell or form of the Word). These events therefore form an even greater scope encompassing anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as the mystery of the flesh of the Logos, which exists as a historical reality in testifying to the revelation of the Logos in the humanity of Christ.<sup>396</sup>

The resurrection of the crucified is important as the revelation of this event, as the triumph of the Word in His human existence. The Christian message states that the Word became flesh. But it is not enough merely to state this. It tells a story: the story of how this state of affairs came to pass, how it became true that God the Lord took man to Himself by becoming Man. From this point of view the Christian message is the answer to the problem of the Synoptists, whether Jesus of Nazareth is really the Christ, the Son of God. Its answer is Yes, and now it lays all its emphasis on the fact that the sole source of this human being's existence and power is the agency of the Word of God, that in Him the Word of God wills to be taken up and grasped, believed and understood, the Word as the mystery of the flesh, but the flesh as the shell and form of the Word.<sup>397</sup>

Finally, we take notice of the role that faith must play in the revelation of God in Christ Jesus given the backdrop of the ἐγένετο. It is faith in the God-man that answers the noetic problem of veiling and unveiling in the ontology of Jesus Christ. This is the Logos acting in the flesh of Jesus as the real embodiment of the Triune God that can only be revealed by faith in the object of faith; that is, in this God-man. We see here the real thrust of enhypostasis *and* anhypostasis in the

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<sup>395</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, pp. 167-68.

<sup>396</sup> For Barth, the ἐγένετο cannot be limited to the event of the birth of Jesus. 'The fact that God became Man, that His Word became hearable and we ourselves became reconciled to God, is true because it became true, and because it becomes true before our eyes and ears in the witness of Scripture, in the movement which it attests from non-revelation to revelation, from promise to fulfillment, from the cross to the resurrection (cf. *CD I/2*, p. 167).

<sup>397</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, pp. 167-68.

flesh of Christ, who as God incarnate, speaks the very words of faith, which must be received by faith in the One who manifests Himself in Jesus Christ.

Faith as it were, discovers that this Man is God. God's personal action as such is its object. Can it be otherwise, seeing the reality of Jesus Christ which is here contemplated is revelation, and revelation is the object of faith, and so knowledge of it is knowledge of faith? The very reason why a distinction is here made between God and man – and obviously the better to understand the unity – is in order that their unity may be seen always as an act of God, and that in this act God Himself may always be seen as the Lord.<sup>398</sup>

We see very clearly here how Barth links the act of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, in the unity of God and humanity, with the reality of the ἐγένετο. As such, this personal action of God in the becoming man must be discovered by faith, in the object of faith, made manifest in union of God and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ.

#### 4.5 Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis: Ontology as Dialectic in Karl Barth's Christology

With anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis firmly grounded as the ontological foundation to express the human nature of Christ, Barth uses this Christological frame of reference to dialectically argue for, and express, the *reality* of Christ's human nature in its union with the Logos. This anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectic first emerges (in its formative state) in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* where Barth engages Lutheran and Reformed Christology as his way to distinguish the human nature of Christ in its union with the Logos. This dialectic is then more fully developed in the *Church Dogmatics* where Barth argues for a 'separate', rather than a 'distinctive' attribute of Christ's human nature in its union with the Logos.<sup>399</sup> As we have shown, while both Lutheran and Reformed theology found ontological agreement in Christ's human nature as anhypostasis and enhypostasis, there remained sharp disagreement over the form in which the Logos become flesh in the incarnation.<sup>400</sup> This ontological variance proves pivotal for

<sup>398</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, p. 168.

<sup>399</sup> In the *Church Dogmatics* Barth takes seriously the question: In what sense can the flesh assumed by Christ be understood as 'separate' in the person of the God-man?

<sup>400</sup> In adopting the traditional dogmatic doctrine of the two natures, Luther taught the full unity of the deity and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, 'the full participation or the humanity in the deity and of the deity in the humanity'. Furthermore, Luther teaches the 'impersonality of the human nature of Christ (an- or enhypostasis) given the union of the humanity and the divinity of Christ is one Person. 'Luther does not agree with the exegetes of the early church who understood Philippians 2:6 f. ("He emptied Himself") as describing an act of the pre-existent Christ at the time of the incarnation; rather he understood it as describing the attitude of the incarnate Christ...He



Barth as he considers the reality of *vere homo* in the human nature of Christ as the instrument of God's revelation.

In the *Göttingen Dogmatics* (GD) Barth critiques the Lutheran and Reformed controversy over the union of divine and human natures in Christ.

The statement that the human nature has subsistence only by and in the Logos may not be reversed. We may not say that the Logos subsists only in the human nature of Christ.<sup>401</sup>

Herein Barth examines the Lutheran and Reformed controversy over the eternal Word of God as *Logos ensarkos* and *Logos asarkos*, also known as the *extra Calvinisticum*, which was rooted in their disagreement over the form of the Logos becoming human nature in the incarnation of Christ.<sup>402</sup> The Lutherans argued that the flesh of Christ is so united to the Logos that wherever the Logos is, there it has the flesh most present with it,<sup>403</sup> which Barth contrasts with the Reformed who agreed that the whole Logos dwells in the human nature of Christ, but is *not* fully enclosed in, or limited to, the human nature it indwells (GD:158).<sup>404</sup> Barth identifies the problem indicative to the Lutheran view of the incarnation; that is, the Logos is understood to be fully enclosed in the flesh of Christ, which in turn logically limits the Logos spatially within the being of the man Jesus Christ. Recognizing this obvious ontological difficulty, the Lutherans also argued that because the flesh of Christ could not be logically separated from the divine Logos in this incarnate union, the freedom from limitation must apply to the flesh as well (GD:158).<sup>405</sup>

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did not give up the "form of God" and take on "the form of a servant" once for all at the time of the incarnation; rather the man Jesus possessed the form of God at all times and could have used it and brought it to bear, but at every point he laid it aside and made himself the servant of all rather than their Lord' (cf. Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, p. 194).

<sup>401</sup> Cf. GD, p. 158.

<sup>402</sup> Calvin states, 'For even if the Word in his immeasurable essence united with the nature of man into one person, we do not imagine that he was confined therein. Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended from heaven in such a way that, without leaving heaven, he willed to be borne in the virgin's womb, to go about the earth, and to hang upon the cross; yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning (cf. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II, xiii, 4, p. 481)!

<sup>403</sup> Barth cites J. Gerhard, in Schmid, p. 230; Schmid-Pohlmann, p. 205; Schmid ET p. 308.

<sup>404</sup> In expressing the Reformed position with respect to the union of Christ's divine nature with the human nature of Jesus Barth cites Calvin's statement that "we do not imagine that He was confined therein", (Cf. Calvin, *Inst.* II, 13, 4 in LCC, XX, p. 481).

<sup>405</sup> Luther adopted and sharpened the doctrine of the enhypostasis to read that the human nature of Christ has no hypostasis (separate existence) of its own, but possesses it in the divine nature... Luther's idea of the total person in Christ led to the further development of the doctrine of ubiquity – the idea of Christ's exalted human nature as everywhere present (cf. Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology*, pp. 229-30).



The Reformed rejected the ubiquity of Christ's human nature on the grounds that it denies the reality of *true man* in Christ. Whereas, if the human nature is not finite, it is by definition not true human nature, which in turn raises the critical question of how the human nature of Christ can be understood as an organ of revelation.<sup>406</sup> The Reformed responded to the Lutherans with their own thesis; that is 'the Logos, while dwelling wholly in the flesh, also remains wholly outside it' (*GD:159*).<sup>407</sup>

Barth argues against the Lutherans given the Reformed principle that ubiquity is strictly an attribute of the divine Logos, not the man Jesus. Barth summarizes the Reformed position by explaining that 'the Logos so unites the human nature to himself that he totally indwells it and yet is totally transcendent and infinite outside it'.<sup>408</sup> Barth then asks if the two natures in Christ are not separated, does it follow that the humanity is everywhere the deity is. Barth answers his own question that deity alone is inconceivable and omnipresent in agreement with the Reformed in that the divine nature also exists *outside* the flesh it has assumed, and yet no less present in it, being personally with it (*GD:159*).<sup>409</sup>

Barth clearly favors the Reformed against the Lutherans in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* where he argues for the so called Calvinistic *extra* based upon three main points:

1. This doctrine does not deny the Lutheran concern that God is wholly in his revelation because the Logos in Christ's flesh and the Logos outside Christ's flesh are naturally not two different entities, but remain the same totality (*GD:159*).
2. The Lutheran counter doctrine that ties the Logos inseparably to the flesh of Christ leads to the inescapable deduction of the ubiquity of the flesh, which evaporates the true humanity of the Redeemer and thereby eliminates the objective possibility of revelation (*GD:160*).
3. The dialectic of 'totally in and totally outside' a valuable safeguard of the mystery, of the indirectness of revelation is maintained because the deity is inconceivable. 'At one and the same time God is wholly in his revelation and without subtraction a perceptible

<sup>406</sup> The Lutheran argument for the ubiquity of Christ's human nature hits at the core of Barth's Christological method and the expression of Christ's human nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

<sup>407</sup> See Calvin *Institutes* II, xiii, 4.

<sup>408</sup> Barth cites Maresius in Heppe, p. 335; ET p. 418.

<sup>409</sup> Barth cites the Heidelberg Catechism Question 48.

object, man, and wholly not an object, a man, but the immutable divine subject, not merely as Father and Spirit but also in the medium of revelation itself, in the Mediator, the Son. The Son is both *logos ensarkos* and *logos asarkos*’ (GD:160).

Barth draws a clear distinction between the human nature of Christ (as both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis),<sup>410</sup> and the Logos, who reveals Himself in this human nature He has assumed. However, because the Logos exists in perfect unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit as a Triune God, He cannot limit Himself spatially within the human nature that He indwells, nor can the human nature be enjoined to the Logos ontologically in His divine incomprehensibility. We see therefore in the unity of the God-man Barth’s clear distinction between the subject (the Logos), and the object, (the humanity assumed by Christ) with respect to the *Logos ensarkos* and *Logos asarkos*; while arguing for the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature in this union:

...the constitution of the God-man does not involve the union of the Logos and a human person but the union of the Logos and the human nature, since the Logos, the Son of God himself, wills to be the person of the God-man.<sup>411</sup>

We note in this passage a concise summary of how Barth understands the union of the Logos with human nature of Jesus Christ in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*; whereas the Logos wills to take to Himself a human nature (not a human person) in becoming the God-man. Negatively, as anhypostasis, this human nature has no subsistent reality in itself, in union with and in fact becoming, the Logos. Positively, as enhypostasis, the human nature of Christ enjoys reality (*vere homo*), as it subsists in union with the Logos.<sup>412</sup>

In the *Church Dogmatics* Barth once again engages Lutheran and Reformed theology in view of the Calvinistic *extra*, with the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectic as the central point of contact. However, in the *Church Dogmatics* we see a clear transition in Barth’s thinking as he more deliberately argues the Reformed *extra* in juxtaposition with the Lutheran *solely* concept of

<sup>410</sup> As we have shown, in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* Barth did not develop the terms anhypostasis and enhypostasis as a dual formula to express the human nature of Christ. Rather, the emphasis fell on the anhypostasis where the human nature of Christ has no subsistent reality aside from its union with the Logos. Barth referred to enhypostasis to affirm the reality of Christ’s human nature in its union with the Logos.

<sup>411</sup> Cf. GD, p. 163.

<sup>412</sup> We note here that Barth’s conception of real subsistence in the human nature of Christ (enhypostasis) is always qualified by its anhypostasis.

the Logos indwelling the human nature of Christ (*CD I/2:168*). We therefore observe in the *Church Dogmatics* a more evenly balanced argument expressed in Barth's anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectic as he works through 'the Eutychian leaning of the Lutherans' set against 'the Nestorian leaning of the Reformed' (*CD I/2:161*).<sup>413</sup>

The act of God becoming humanity, this ἐγένετο, becomes Barth's central thesis in developing the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectic by vetting the point of departure between the Lutherans and Reformed over what it means for God and humanity to be united in Jesus Christ.<sup>414</sup> As the mediator between God and humanity Barth rejects Jesus Christ as a third being midway between the divine and human, but ontologically, He is God *and* humanity. It is the 'and' that conveys this inconceivable act of 'becoming' in the incarnation. Moreover, the act of God becoming human is not simply the act of the Logos; but of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit acting in perfect unity as the Triune God to become flesh through the Son (*CD I/2:161*).<sup>415</sup>

The unity into which the human nature is assumed is this unity with the Word, and only to that extent—because this Word is the eternal Word—the union of the human with the divine nature. But the eternal Word is with the Father and the Holy Spirit the unchangeable God Himself and so incapable of any change or admixture. Unity with Him, the "becoming" of the Word, cannot therefore mean the origination of a third between Word and flesh, but only the assumption of the flesh by the Word.<sup>416</sup>

Presupposing Lutheran and Reformed agreement on Christological essentials (i.e. that divine and human natures are united in Jesus Christ) Barth presses the question of what humanity's *reality* in 'God becoming man' means for Lutheran and Reformed theology in view of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. He argues that the union of God *and* humanity's nature in Jesus Christ means that this man Himself becomes God, but not in a way that is a divinization of humanity. It also means axiomatically that Jesus is not self-existent because His existence as humanity is wholly

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<sup>413</sup> For Barth the use of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis provides an objective measure to judge both Lutheran and Reformed theology in view of their basic agreement with this ontological description of Christ's human nature.

<sup>414</sup> Barth acknowledges that the Lutherans and Reformed had the same starting-point, that the unity involved in Jesus Christ is really and originally the unity of the divine Word with the human being assumed by Him – the union of two natures (cf. *CD I/2*, p. 162).

<sup>415</sup> D. M. Baillie observes that with Barth, the doctrine of the Trinity is not the epilogue to his dogmatics, but the starting point, and indeed broad foundation. ... 'Plainly Barth does not regard the doctrine of the Trinity as standing for real distinctions in God, and, moreover, for the *kind* of distinctions on which orthodox belief has always insisted: the three persons are not three parts of God, and yet they are not mere attributes, or shifting aspects, relative to our apprehension, or arbitrarily selected from among others, but are the eternal being of God who has revealed Himself to us in Christ and dwells in us by the Holy Spirit' (cf. D. M. Baillie, *God was in Christ*, pp. 34-37).

<sup>416</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 161.

that of God who acts in His Word (CD I/2:162). It is therefore the question of this man's reality in union with the Logos that demands Barth's attention, and in turn his reliance on the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature in working out theologically his thinking here.<sup>417</sup>

This is the context in which Barth examines the union of the Word and human nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, which he uses ontologically to express 'that He exists as Man so far and only so far as He exists as God, i.e., in the mode of existence of the eternal Word of God' (CD I/2:163). Barth then uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectically to examine the disparity between the Lutheran and Reformed concepts of the reality of Christ's human nature (CD I/2:163).

It was at this point that the disagreement started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century between Lutheran and Reformed theology. What is the meaning of the eternal Word having given His own existence to a man's possibility of existence, to a man's being and nature, and so having given it reality.<sup>418</sup>

The material point that concerns Barth here is an ontological understanding into the reality of Christ's existence as human nature in union with the Logos – as an *instrument* of revelation. While both Lutherans and Reformed certainly agreed in principle that Christ's human nature was real, the question that remained unresolved was how this reality is manifested in the human nature of Jesus Christ. In other words, if the human nature exists solely in the becoming / assuming of the Logos, how do we distinguish between the Word and human nature in Christ (without positing two persons), while at the same time maintaining the uncompromising unity of the God-man in Jesus Christ? This, in essence, is the question that Barth explores via the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dialectic.

Assuming that the flesh of Christ has existence only so far as it acquires it through the Word, Barth raises the question: how far does such existence, especially in the form of the Word's existence, really belong to the flesh, and whether in such a *sustentatio* God and humanity are really being thought of as one and not perhaps secretly as two (CD I/2:163)? In Barth's thinking

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<sup>417</sup> Barth never wavered in his belief in the reality of Jesus Christ as a *true* man. The issue he wrestles with is how to express the reality of *true* man and *true* God in the person of Christ. Ultimately, even the ontology of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis cannot solve this mystery of the God-man presented in the Scriptures.

<sup>418</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 163.

the Lutheran emphasis on the union the divine and human natures in the ἐγένετο went beyond the Reformed understanding that the human nature is sustained by the Logos.<sup>419</sup>

This communis participatio does, in fact, go beyond the Reformed sustentare or even communicare, and anticipates the peculiar Lutheran doctrine of the unity of the natures and of the consequent communicatio idiomatum. But instead of the one-sided relationship of the ἐγένετο, instead of the assumptio in which the logos is and continues to be the subject, does this not give us a kind of reciprocal relation between the creator and the creature? Do we not have revealedness instead of revelation, a state instead of an event.<sup>420</sup>

The Lutherans, well aware of the danger in over emphasizing the unity of the divine and human natures – particularly in view of Reformed criticism – were still unable to effectively distinguish between these two natures in Christ. Barth meets this ontological difficulty by explaining that the human nature is united to the Logos according to the doctrine of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, while also dispelling the argument that appropriation of these terms denies personality to the human nature of Christ (in a Docetic sense). Rather, although *negatively*, Christ's flesh has no self existence, positively it possesses real existence in its union with the Word, who becomes God Himself in the event of revelation and reconciliatioin (*CD* I/2:164).

Understood in this its original sense, this particular doctrine, abstruse in appearance only, is particularly well adapted to make it clear that the reality attested by Holy Scripture, Jesus Christ, is the reality of a divine act of Lordship which is unique and singular as compared with all other events, and in this way to characterize it as a reality held up to faith by revelation. It is in virtue of the eternal Word that Jesus Christ exists as a man of flesh and blood in our sphere, as a man like us, as an historical phenomenon. But it is only in virtue of the divine Word that He exists as such. If He existed in a different way, how would He be revelation in the real sense in which revelation is intended in Holy Scripture?<sup>421</sup>

It is clear from this passage that Barth understands enhypostasis to be the ontological mode of revelation in the human nature of Christ in congruence with the witness of Scripture. Despite the

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<sup>419</sup> Paul Althaus observes, 'The contradiction between Luther's understanding of the genus majesticum (the doctrine that Jesus, according to his human nature, possessed all divine power and attributes at his birth) as the presupposition of Christ's emptying himself within history remains for the most part in contradiction to the genuine picture of the man Jesus' (cf. Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, p. 197).

<sup>420</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, p. 164.

<sup>421</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, p. 165.

negative aspect of anhypostasis, the strength of enhypostasis affirms the reality of Christ's human nature.

Because of this positive aspect, it is well worth making the negation a dogma and giving it the very careful consideration which it received in early Christology.<sup>422</sup>

But how should we understand the incarnate Word? What is His form? Given the Lutheran perspective Barth responds that He is found in the little baby in the stable, the one man on the cross. And as such, He is the Word made flesh, the one in who we owe our faith and obedience. This is Jesus of Nazareth. This is the decisive point in Barth's understanding of the Word of God who descended from heaven without becoming unlike Himself, by assuming to Himself the flesh of real humankind. In this way God Himself no longer exists apart from the human being assumed by Christ.

There is no other form or manifestation in heaven or on earth save the one child in the stable, the one man on the cross. This is the Word to whom we must hearken, render faith and obedience, cling ever so closely. Every question concerning the Word which is directed away from Jesus of Nazareth, the human being of Christ, is necessarily and wholly directed away from Himself, the Word, and therefore from God Himself, because the Word, and therefore God Himself, does not exist apart from the human being of Christ.<sup>423</sup>

Barth demonstrates the strength of the Lutheran argument with respect to the unity of the Logos with human nature given their rejection of any separation of the humanity of Christ from the Logos in the incarnation, according to the biblical account.

What we have just described is the Christological position of Luther, at any rate, his favorite one, as already familiar to us. Moved, and as a rule moved exclusively, by the question of the grace of God, he clutched with both hands, like Anselm of Canterbury and Bernard of Clairvaux before him, at the answer of the Pauline-Johannine Christology, that God's grace was manifested to us really, concretely, and surely in the stable and on the cross, in the human existence of Jesus Christ, that everything was done and completed for us by God Himself in this very human existence and only in it, that our justification was accomplished in His sight and had only to be received in faith.<sup>424</sup>

However, Barth continues that Lutheran orthodoxy and its understanding of the humanity of Christ evolved to the point where the enhypostasis of Christ's human nature was understood to

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

<sup>423</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, pp. 165-66.

<sup>424</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 166.

exist in a reciprocal relationship between the human nature of Christ and the Word. That is, just as Christ's human nature has its reality in the Logos as enhypostasis; the reversal is also true, that the Word only has reality through, and in, Christ's humanity.

This assertion of Luther's was then built up doctrinally by Lutheran orthodoxy in the form of an idea which expressly maintained a perichoresis between the Word of God and the human being of Christ, i.e., a reversal of the statement about the enhypostasis of Christ's human nature, to the effect that as the humanity only has reality through and in the Word, so too the Word only has reality through and in the humanity.<sup>425</sup>

As enhypostasis attests to the reality of Christ's human nature as the instrument of God's revelation, and anhypostasis denies of the reality of Christ's humanity apart from the ἐγένετο, the Lutheran understanding of Christ's human nature existing in a reciprocal relationship with the Logos posed obvious problems for Barth and his understanding of Christ's human nature as a real humanity.

The problems raised by this idea may be plainly reduced to the following questions. Does it take such account of the freedom, majesty and glory of the Word of God that they are in no way merged and submerged in His becoming flesh? And if such account is taken to it, then does the same hold true also of the flesh which He has become?<sup>426</sup>

Barth recognizes that the Lutherans were not blind to the ontological problem they encountered in the *perichoresis*.<sup>427</sup> Practically speaking, 'they wished to adhere as much to the vere Deus as to the vere homo, and not to infringe upon the Word as God in His divinity or upon the flesh as a creature in its creatureliness.' Gerhard argues that while the flesh with the Word were united and always present with each other, this unity must be thought of in the *modus illocalis*, *supernaturalis et sublimissimus*.<sup>428</sup> Whereas, Quenstedt qualifies his definition of the union of

<sup>425</sup> In his presentation of the Lutheran argument Barth cites Gerhard, (*Loci theol.* 1610 f. L, IV, 121), and Quenstedt, (Quenstedt, *Theol. did. pol.* 1685, III, c. 3 m. I sect. 2 qu. 5<sup>th</sup>), both of whom acknowledge the reciprocal relational union between the Logos and the human nature assumed in the union (Cf. CD I/2, p. 166).

<sup>426</sup> Cf. CD I/2, pp. 166-67.

<sup>427</sup> The concept of *perichoresis* first emerged in patristic thinking as a way to describe how the Father and the Son are receptive and permeate each other ('containing' one another) in their relationship to each other as mutually interpenetrative. The noun *perichoresis* was used in a Christological way by the patristic Fathers in the sense of 'encircle' or 'encompass'. Gregory of Nazianzus uses *perichoresis* to maintain that the two natures of Christ 'reciprocate' into one another, and are alternative (cf. G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, pp. 292-92, where Prestige cites Gregory of Nazianzus in Gr. Nyss. c. Eun. I.95, M. 280B).

<sup>428</sup> Gerhard explains that the human nature is united to the divine nature without the human nature exalted as a supernatural or divine nature (*Loci theol.* 1610 f. L, IV).



divine and human natures ...*ita tamen, ut nec caro immense sit, nec λογος inculdator, finiatur vel circumscribatur, sed et illa finite et hic infinitus permaneat* (CD I/2:167).<sup>429</sup>

Yet, despite these qualifications of the *perichoresis* given by Gerhard and Quenstedt, Barth clearly recognizes the difficulty of this Lutheran dogma, and sees it as venturing too far in blurring the unity of the Logos with the flesh; such that the reversal of the enhypostasis of Christ's human nature (i.e., the flesh takes on the unlimited attributes of the Word) becomes an open ended statement that crumbles without a foundation, because with it, comes the reversal of revelation.

But what does a limiting of the Word to the flesh mean, if it is specifically not to assert a really spatial limiting, i.e., one appropriate to the concept "flesh", yet just as little an unlimitedness in the flesh appropriate to the concept "Word"? Have not Luther and the Lutherans ventured too much in their attempt at such a simple reversal of the statement about the enhypostasis of the humanity of Christ, or at the completion of it by a statement about the "enfleshment" of the Word in the exclusive sense? Does such a statement make any clear assertion at all, seeing its aim is to deny neither the *vere Deus* nor the *vere homo*? The road which led to this crowning statement is understandable and illuminating. But would it not have been better either not to make it, or to express it at once by a counter-statement, since it obviously cannot be explained in and by itself?<sup>430</sup>

Barth understands that the 'Word became flesh' answers the question posed in the synoptics: is Jesus of Nazareth really the Christ, the Son of God? The answer is an emphatic yes as attested by the enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. For Barth, this is the reality of God's revelation as a completed event in the person of Jesus Christ. This is the mystery of the flesh of Christ, flesh that Barth understands to be the 'shell and form of the Word' (CD I/2. P. 168).

Faith, as it were, discovers that this Man is God. God's personal action as such is its object. Can it be otherwise, seeing the reality of Jesus Christ which is here contemplated in revelation, and revelation is the object of faith, and so knowledge of it is knowledge of faith? The very reason why a distinction is made here between God and man—and obviously the better to understand the unity—is in order that their unity may be seen always as an act of God, and that in this act God Himself may always be seen as the Lord.<sup>431</sup>

<sup>429</sup> Quenstedt explains that yet, although the flesh is not unlimited, the Word is not restricted, but infinite.

<sup>430</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 167.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid. p. 168.

The Reformed responded to the Lutheran claim that the Logos existed solely in the human existence of Christ by arguing that since the Word is flesh, He also is, and continues to be, what He is in Himself – existing outside (*extra*) the flesh (CD I/2:168).<sup>432</sup> Barth acknowledges that the Reformed argument of the *extra* was intended to refute the Lutheran concept of *solely*, not as a new innovation, but rather to affirm the continuation of early orthodox Christology. However, Barth also argues that the *Calvinisticum extra* was not a valid argument to support the Reformed concept of ‘generally of the divine and the creaturely-human in separation’. In this way Barth transitions his argument from defending the *extra* as a legitimate understanding of how the Logos becomes humanity (yet existing within and without the flesh of humanity as he argued in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*), to a strict preservation of divine and human natures being separate, consistent with Chalcedon.<sup>433</sup>

While we may attribute this shift in Barth’s thinking to a maturing of his Christology, we also see in this movement a direct link to Barth’s fuller development of the duality of anhypostasis and enhypostasis in the *Church Dogmatics*. That is, the humanity of Christ is derived strictly based upon its assumption by the Logos, and the freedom of the Logos as the second person of the Trinity to assume flesh. Yet, even in the flesh, Jesus is fully, and in every respect, the Logos.

It is further to be noted that the Reformed position was by no means directed against the positive content of Luther’s, not to speak of St. Paul’s saying (Col. 2:9), but against a negative conclusion derived there-from; and so not against the *totus intra carnem* but against the *numquam et nusquam extra carnem*.<sup>434</sup>

Correct as they were to defend Christ’s human nature as *very homo*, Barth argues that the Nestorian error invalidates the Reformed understanding of the *extra*. In other words, Barth understands the Reformed *extra* as a *distinctive*, rather than a *separate* attribute of the flesh of Christ. What we see here is Barth’s refusal to distinguish ontologically between the divine and human natures, which are absolutely united in Jesus Christ. Barth therefore understands the

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<sup>432</sup> Barth cites Calvin, *Institutes*. II, 13, 4.

<sup>433</sup> Barth cites Gregory of Nyssa who was ‘clear in rebutting the idea that on the basis of the incarnation the infinity of God became enclosed in the limits of the flesh as in a vessel and in opposition to it thought of the divinity of the Word as laying hold on the humanity, which might be illustrated by the unity and separateness between fuel and flame’ (cf. *Or. cat.* 10). Barth also cites John of Damascus: Without separating from the Father’s bosom, the Word dwelt in the bosom of the holy virgin... and over all He was Himself when He existed in the bosom of the holy bearer of God (cf. *Erkdos.* 3, 7).

<sup>434</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 169.

Reformed to cut in two (so to speak) the union of divine and human natures as they distinguish them one from the other in a way that negates the enhypostasis; that is, the reality of Jesus as the Logos that in effect separates Jesus Christ into two persons.

When they negated this negation, when maintained this *extra*, which was only meant as an *etiam extra*, it could as little occur to the Reformed as to the early doctors to question, in the sense of the Nestorian error, the Chalcedonian unity of the two natures in the person of the Word or, in consequence, the hypostatic union itself. They wished the *extra* to be regarded, not as *separative*, but as *distinctive*. Along with the *extra* they also asserted the *intra* with thoroughgoing seriousness. With the Lutherans they asserted a *praesentia intima perpetua* of the Logos in the flesh, i.e., in the sense of what Luther really meant to assert, an *ubiquitas humane naturea* in virtue of the *operatio gloriosa* of the exalted God-Man.<sup>435</sup>

Barth explains that the Reformed argued for the reality of the *λογος ασαρκος* along with the reality of the *logos ensarkos*. As such, the Reformed argued against the reversal of the enhypostasis, which they understood to imperil either the divinity or the humanity of Christ.

They merely wished to maintain the *extra* too, beyond the *intra*, i.e., on the one hand the divinity of the God-Man, on the other His humanity as such. They did not want the reality of the *λογος ασαρκος* abolished or suppressed in the reality of the *logos ensarkos*. On the contrary, they wished the *λογος ασαρκος* to be regarded equally seriously as the *terminus a quo*, as the *λογος ενσαρκος* was regarded as the *terminus ad quam* of the incarnation. And so they wanted to reject that reversal of the enhypostasis, by which, it seemed to them, either the divinity or the humanity as such was imperiled (*CD I/2:169 – 170*).<sup>436</sup>

Barth argues that in the Reformed insistence upon the *λογος ασαρκος* there exists a willingness to obscure the unity of the God-man as expressed in the *ἐγένετο*; whereupon Barth asks if the Reformed static acceptance of the *ἐγένετο*, together with the ontic relevance of their Christology are in fact preserved in juxtaposition with the dynamic element in the *ἐγένετο*.

Obviously this view, too, is afflicted by its own doubtfulness. It visualizes the dynamic element in the *ἐγενετο* and it preserves the noetic interest of the Christology. But it may be asked whether the static element in the *ἐγενετο* and therefore the ontic relevance of the Christology are equally conserved in this view. Over and above the visualizing of the

<sup>435</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 169.

<sup>436</sup> Barth specifically refers here to Heppe's citation of Maresius' 'trenchant formulation', 'Since the divinity cannot be comprehended and is present everywhere, it follows necessarily that it is actually outside the human nature which it assumed, but is none the less in it and continues in personal union with it' (cf. Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 418).

way (with its inevitable distinction between the word who assumed flesh and the flesh assumed by the word), has not the end of the way, namely the unity of both become obscured? Yet is it not upon this end that everything depends? And in order to speak without obscurity of this end, had we not better drop all reflections upon the way to it as such?<sup>437</sup>

Barth further argues that the Reformed asserted, in harmony with Church tradition, that the hypostatic union in Christ is not compromised absent the Lutheran innovation. But as the Lutherans failed to show how far the *vere Deus* is preserved to the same extent as the *very homo* in the *extra*, so too the Reformed failed to show convincingly how far the *extra* does not include the assumption of a twofold Christ, ‘of a *logos ensarkos* alongside a *logos asarkos*, and therefore a dissolution of the unity of the two natures and hypostatic union. In short, it cannot be denied that the Reformed *totus intra et extra* offers at least as many difficulties as the Lutheran *totus intra*. With respect to the event of the ἐγένετο, ‘Christology may have a static-ontic interest, or it may have a dynamic noetic interest.’ In either sense (and in view that no synthesis could be reached between the two) each view, when fully developed, raises definite questions against it that are difficult to answer (*CD I/2:170*).

But when we recollect that in the centuries after the Reformation both sides strove genuinely and seriously, but unsuccessfully, in this direction for unification, when, above all, we recollect that there is a riddle in the fact itself, and that even in the New Testament two lines can be discern in this matter, we will at least be on our guard against thinking of oversimple solutions. Perhaps there can be no resting from the attempt to understand this ἐγένετο.<sup>438</sup>

In the *Doctrine of Reconciliation* Barth once again takes up the *λογος ασαρκος*, but this time with a more critical eye in emphasizing the unity of the God-man. As reconciler, as the God-man, the eternal Son must not be understood to exist *in abstracto* (i.e., as *λογος ασαρκος*).<sup>439</sup> It is only as the God-man that Jesus Christ is revealed as the reconciler between humanity and God.

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<sup>437</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 170.

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 170-171.

<sup>439</sup> Darren Sumner aptly notes that Barth recognizes that Calvin never intended to abstract the *Logos* from the human Jesus, but simply to say that the one who comes in the form of a servant does not at any time cease to be Lord and creator, an existence that is not wholly limited by time, space, and flesh. Any yet, Barth expresses his concern that, ‘there is something unsatisfactory about the theory, in that right up to our own day it has led to fatal speculation about the being and work of the *λογος ασαρκος*, or a God whom we think we can know elsewhere, and whose divine being we can define from elsewhere than in and from the contemplation of His presence and activity as the Word made flesh’ (*CD IV/1*, p. 181). Darren Sumner, ‘The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth’s Critical

In this context we must not refer to the second “person” of the Trinity as such, to the eternal Son or the eternal Word of God *in abstracto*, and therefore to the so-called λογος ασαρκος...The second “person” of the Godhead in Himself and as such is not God the reconciler. In Himself and as such He is not revealed to us...If it is true that God became man, then in this we have to recognize and respect His eternal will and purpose and resolve—His free and gracious will which He did not owe it either to Himself or to the world to have, by which He did not need to come to the decision to which He has in fact come, and behind which, in these circumstances, we cannot go, behind which we do not have to reckon with any Son of God in Himself, and any λογος ασαρκος, with any other Word of God than that which was made flesh.<sup>440</sup>

The problem that Barth struggled to overcome in the λογος ασαρκος was what he described as the ‘fatal speculation about the being and work about the λογος ασαρκος, or a God whom we think we can know elsewhere, and whose divine being we can define from elsewhere than in and from contemplation of His presence and activity as the Word made flesh’ (CD IV/1:181).<sup>441</sup> And yet, from the other way around Barth concedes that in this Christological mystery ‘we cannot possibly understand or estimate it if we try to explain it by a self-limitation or de-divinisation of God in the uniting of the Son with the man Jesus. If in Christ—even in the humiliated Christ born in a manger at Bethlehem and crucified on the cross of Golgotha—God is not unchanged and wholly God, then everything we may say about the reconciliation of the world by God in this humiliated One is left hanging in the air’ (CD IV/1:183).

Barth always freely admitted to the mystery of the incarnation, the ‘real divine sonship of the man Jesus’, God the Son who took upon Himself the flesh of humanity ‘elected and prepared for Him for this purpose and clothed it with actuality by making Himself its actuality’ (CD IV/2:49-50). Nevertheless, we argue that Barth approaches the mystery of the ‘Word became flesh’ given the context of the λογος ασαρκος, made through the rubric of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature.<sup>442</sup>

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Reception of the Extra Calvinisticum’. *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, Vol. 15, Number 1, January 2013.

<sup>440</sup> Cf. CD IV/1:52.

<sup>441</sup> Barth states that Calvin himself goes a long way towards ‘trying to reckon with this ‘other’ God. For his part, it was Calvin’s aim ‘in that theory to hold to the fact that the Son of God who is wholly this man (totus intra carnem as it was formulated by a later Calvinist) is also wholly God and therefore omnipotent and omnipresent (and to that extent extra carnem, not bound or altered by its limitations (CD IV/1:181).

<sup>442</sup> Darren Sumner argues that Barth’s solution to the dilemma of the Logos asarkos and ensarkos came in Barth’s doctrine of the election of Jesus Christ as the God-man, in whose incarnation affects simultaneously the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. ‘According to the doctrine of the election of grace as the election of Jesus Christ, of God’s

Against the fact that God has done this in Jesus Christ, and that this can be so only in Him, as this One ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί (I Tim. 3:16), protest and contradiction will always be made, and, because it is against the confessedly (ομολογουμένως) great mystery, the Christian sacramentum, it may claim to be relevant and even necessary from the standpoint of the unbelief which indwells us all. But the protest against the concept of anhypostasis or enhypostasis as such is without substance, since this concept is quite unavoidable at this point if we are properly to describe the mystery.<sup>443</sup>

Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is not intended to solve the mystery of the union of the Logos with the flesh of humanity, but it does provide the ontological bearing that Barth uses dialectically to judge the reality of Christ's human nature given Lutheran and Reformed Christology.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

We have considered Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis (both explicitly and implicitly) as his way to express the revelation of Jesus Christ as the 'Word became flesh' given four separate, but interrelated movements: (1) Barth's theological / philosophical method in expressing the revelation of Jesus Christ, (2) Barth's argument that Jesus Christ is the true instrument of revelation in *ANSELM: Fides Quarens Intellectum*, (3) the revelatory relationship between anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, and the ἐγένετο in Barth's Christology, and (4) Barth's use of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dialectic to express the humanity of Christ in dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology. We conclude this chapter with the following observations.

The influence of philosophy on Karl Barth's theological method will no doubt continue to be debated, particularly in view of Barth's understanding of the Word of God revealed in Scripture, and in Christ. Nevertheless, we argue that Barth clearly expresses the revelation of God made manifest in Jesus Christ as the true revelation of God, which is absolutely dependent upon God's movement towards humanity, in contra-distinction to revelation attributed to philosophical rationalization or experience. Furthermore, as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, the reality of the

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self-movement toward humanity, this form is eternal. Rather than the concepts of immanence and economy it is this twofold state, I suggest, that best maps into the life of the Logos as asarkos and ensarkos' (Darren Sumner, 'The Twofold Life of the Word: Karl Barth's Critical Reception of the Extra Calvinisticum'. *Internal Journal of Systematic Theology*, Vol. 15, Number 1, January 2013. Ontologically we would add here that Barth would not consider this union absent the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

<sup>443</sup> CD IV/2:49-50.

flesh of Christ makes comprehensible that which cannot be comprehended, because in this ontology is realized both ontically (in its substance) and noetically (by faith in its substance) the revelation of God in the God-man, Jesus Christ. It is therefore Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, of God's movement towards humanity in Jesus Christ as the true revelation of God, which provides the ontological grounding for Barth's rejection of philosophy and its claim to the revelation of God.

Written between *Die Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf* at Münster, and the revised first volume of the *Church Dogmatics* at Bonn, the significance of Barth's book on Anselm is not a change to his theological method. But rather, based upon the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, the veiling and unveiling of God becomes grounded both ontically and noetically in Jesus Christ as the revelation of God. As faith in the revealed Christ alone enables true knowledge of God, the foundation is now firmly established for Barth's more mature expression of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as the ontological model of Christ's human nature in the *Church Dogmatics*.

For Barth, the ἐγένετο not only expresses the 'Word became flesh' in Jesus Christ, but it also provides a tangible form to express the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as the Word of God revealed. In the ἐγένετο is true humanity, Christ's human nature, which dialectically veils and unveils the revelation of God. And in becoming true humanity Christ reveals the reality of God in the form of a man in His birth, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. Moreover, Barth understands ἐγένετο not simply (strictly speaking) as the joining of divine and human natures in Christ, but the Logos taking to Himself human essence as the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. This emphasis is clearly undergirded by Barth's appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

Finally, Barth uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dialectic to argue for the reality of Christ's human nature in his dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology. Barth, however, leaves unresolved how to bridge the differences between Lutherans and Reformed Christology in expressing the humanity of Christ. Nevertheless, grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature, Barth allows for a *separate*, but not *distinctive*, attribute of the flesh of Christ. In other words, while Barth acknowledges the separateness of the human nature in union



with the Logos, at the same time he refuses to distinguish ontologically between the divine and human natures, which are absolutely united in Jesus Christ.

## Chapter Five – Anhypostasis and Enhypostasis: Coalescence of Christ's Divine and Human Natures in Barth's Christology

### 5.1 Introduction

Karl Barth's most obvious point of departure from liberal theology is his insistence that the reality and depth of the sinful human condition by definition precludes any human capacity to initiate, and bring about reconciliation with a Holy God. The incongruity between liberal theology's dependence upon philosophical method to discover the revelation of God, and Barth's absolute reliance upon the grace of God for such revelation is quite obvious here. As such, the foundation of Barth's Christology rests upon the free grace of God manifested in the revelation of Jesus Christ, who as the covenant keeper, as very God and very man, initiates and fully accomplishes humanity's reconciliation with God.<sup>444</sup> For Barth, if this foundational truth is misunderstood or compromised, all that follows betrays the truth of the Word of God revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. There can be no compromise here.

Moreover, as the mediator of humanity's reconciliation with God, Jesus Christ is Himself very God as the eternal Word who became flesh in the man Jesus, and He is Himself very man in assuming the fullness of human nature, which Barth uniquely expresses as both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. That is, ontologically speaking, Barth understands that in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth is revealed the eternal Christ both ontically and noetically.<sup>445</sup> Although the human nature of Jesus has no real substance outside its union with the divine Logos, in this union the human nature enjoys real substance as the human nature of the eternal Logos. Furthermore, while the human nature of Christ can (and must) be understood in its *separateness* from the divine nature in union with the Logos, it cannot (and must not) be understood as a being *distinct* in this union. Indeed, very God and very man are absolute one. Such is Barth's insistence upon the

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<sup>444</sup> Based upon the freedom of God Barth understands the response of God to the sin of humanity to be the divine 'yes'. In other words, God has chosen neither to abandon nor isolate Himself from fallen humanity. But rather, He comes to us and reveals Himself to us in Jesus Christ as the true covenant partner of God, as true God and true man. 'In Jesus Christ there is not isolation of man from God or of God from man. Rather, in Him we encounter the history, the dialogue, in which God and man meet together and are together, the reality of the covenant *mutually* contracted, preserved, and fulfilled by them. Jesus Christ is in His one Person, as true *God*, *man's* loyal partner, and as true *man*, *God's*' (cf. Karl Barth, *The Humanity of God*, p. 46).

<sup>445</sup> Barth's work on *Anselm* grounded his understanding of the revelation of Jesus Christ both ontically and noetically, which is realized in the exercise of faith, the source of which is strictly based upon the grace of God.

unrelenting unity of the God-man who is revealed to be Jesus Christ, the true mediator between humanity and God.

We add here that it is neither possible to accurately understand Barth's ontology of Jesus Christ as true God and true man, nor interpret his application of this ontology to the person of Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and humanity, absent an understanding of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis – as Karl Barth uniquely embraced it. That is, Barth insists that the enhypostasis of Christ's human nature must be understood in its relationship to the anhypostasis of that same human nature (in their coupling together), from which Barth creates a unique and dynamic view of the humanity of Christ.<sup>446</sup> In this way the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis establishes and grounds the absolute unity of very God and very man in Jesus Christ, who embodies and accomplishes reconciliation between humanity and God. To say Jesus of Nazareth is to say very God, and to say the Logos of God is to say very man. For Barth, they must be understood as separate in their essence, but never distinct in this union.<sup>447</sup> They are indeed one.

Furthermore, we argue that in the *Church Dogmatics* Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis remains consistent, and in fact serves as the unifying cord that binds together the ontology of Jesus Christ with His role as the mediator of reconciliation; as the keeper of the covenant. Having completed *CD IV/2 (The Doctrine of Reconciliation)* we find quite enlightening Barth's own self assessment of the *Church Dogmatics* to this point. Barth is convinced that he had remained theologically consistent in his *Church Dogmatics* (an answer to claims of a 'new Barth'), which he describes as having been developed within the broad lines of

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<sup>446</sup> As we have shown Barth clearly departs both from the Christology of the patristic church fathers, as well as historical Lutheran and Reformed dogmatics in their interpretation of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. That is, anhypostasis was never coupled together with the enhypostasis and applied to the human nature of Christ. Rather, anhypostasis was used to describe what Christ's human nature is not.

<sup>447</sup> In the Editor's Preface to *CD IV/2*, when describing how the downward movement of Christ (in contrast to the pride of humanity) meets the upward movement of Christ (in contrast to the sloth of humanity), we read the following: 'The schematic parallelism does not mean that Barth is dividing the reconciling work of Christ into different or successful actions. As he lays constant stress on the unity of the person and work of Christ, he makes it quite clear that the downward and upward movement of the Son, the divine verdict and the divine direction, justification and sanctification, gathering and upbuilding, faith and love, are only different aspects of one and the same thing. The one person of the incarnate and exalted Son is the basis of this unity of the whole reality of our reconciliation in Him' (*CD IV/2*, Editors Preface, p. vii).

Christian tradition. We agree with Barth's self assessment here, and further argue that this theological consistency applies to his expression of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as well.<sup>448</sup>

In the twenty-three years since I started this work I have found myself so held and directed that, as far as I can see, there have so far been no important breaks or contradictions in the presentation; no retractions have been necessary (except in detail); and above all—for all the constant critical freedom which I have had to exercise in this respect—I have always found myself content with the broad lines of Christian tradition. That is how I myself see it, and it is my own view that my contemporaries (and even perhaps successors) ought to speak at least more circumspectly when at this point or that they think they have discovered a “new Barth” or, what is worse, a heresy which has seriously to be confessed as such. Naturally, I do not regard myself as infallible. But there is perhaps more inward and outward continuity in the matter than some hasty observers and rash interjectors can at first sight credit.<sup>449</sup>

That being said, in this section we will examine the interrelated movement from ontology in Barth's understanding of Christ's human nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to His role as the mediator of reconciliation between God and humanity. We will do so by considering five themes of coalescence that Barth uses to uniquely express the indissoluble union of very God and very man in the God-man:

1. Jesus Christ: Revelation as Covenant
2. Jesus Christ: The First Adam
3. Jesus Christ: Humiliation and Exaltation in Convergence
4. Jesus Christ: Integration of Person and Work
5. Jesus Christ: Eternal Redeemer

Our analysis will focus primarily on the *Church Dogmatics*<sup>450</sup> where Barth expresses these themes of coalescence in Christ's divine and human natures, which clearly emerge from the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, and often time lead Barth off the beaten track of traditional Reformed theology.<sup>451</sup>

<sup>448</sup> As we have shown, Barth made a clear movement away from his more incongruent appropriation of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* to the *Church Dogmatics* where his coupling of these terms remains consistent throughout.

<sup>449</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, Preface, p. xi.

<sup>450</sup> We also make reference to Barth's essay: *Christ and Adam: Man and humanity in Romans 5*.

<sup>451</sup> We will argue that the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature is indeed the significant impetus that drives Barth's innovative approach to these five categories of coalescence.

## 5.2 Jesus Christ: Revelation as Covenant

In view of the coalescence of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ, we begin our analysis with the revelation of Jesus Christ as covenant. This is not done so capriciously, but out of strict necessity given the priority that Barth places in God's covenant with humanity as the impetus for humanity's reconciliation with God.<sup>452</sup> Given a Reformed backdrop, Barth embraced the covenant of God as the tangible frame of reference that guarantees the reconciliation of humanity with God. Jesus Christ, very God and very man, the eternal Logos who assumed the same humanity that He had created, becomes the revelation of God as the one true covenant keeper between God and humanity.<sup>453</sup> Therefore, the reconciliation of humanity with God flows from the fountain of God's covenant being kept through the one mediator between God and humanity – *the man Christ Jesus*.

Jesus Christ is indeed God in His movement towards man, or, more exactly, in His movement towards the people represented in the one man Jesus of Nazareth, in His covenant with this people, in His being and activity amongst and towards this people... That we know God and have God only in Jesus Christ means that we can know Him and have Him only with the man Jesus of Nazareth and with the people which He represents. Apart from this man and apart from this people God would be a different, an alien God. According to the Christian perception He would not be God at all. According to the Christian perception, the true God is what He is only in this movement, in the movement towards this man, and in Him and through Him towards other men in their unity as His people.<sup>454</sup>

For Barth the impetus and force of the revelation of God, the movement of God towards His people in the person of Christ,<sup>455</sup> is based upon God's covenant with His people.<sup>456</sup> This becomes

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<sup>452</sup> A. T. B. McGowan marks the clear emphasis and foundation of God's covenant with humanity realized in Jesus Christ. McGowan argues that Barth 'builds the idea of covenant into the central themes of his dogmatic theology'. Not only does the covenant relate specifically to the doctrine of election in Barth's theology, but everything is drawn together where God's grace is the basis for the covenant; 'election is its outworking, creation prepares the ground, and reconciliation is its fulfillment (cf. A. T. B. McGowan, 'Karl Barth and Covenant Theology' in *Engaging with Barth: Contemporary evangelical critiques*, p. 115).

<sup>453</sup> Gerald McKenny notes for Barth that it is Jesus Christ, both God Himself and God's human partner, who fulfills the covenant. It is God's faithfulness that overcomes the sinful rejection of the covenant by its human partner. In Christ, God is faithful to His own self-determination to be gracious to humanity, and in Christ, humanity answers the question for human self-determination of the elect by the in Christ's action as God's human partner as God's elect (cf. Gerald McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace – Karl Barth's Moral Theology*, p. 69).

<sup>454</sup> Cf. *CD* II/2, p. 7.

<sup>455</sup> Michael Welker notes that in contra-distinction to Ludwig Feuerbach and his 'consciousness of God', (which is nothing more than an 'abstract-existential' "God" of subjectivist faith), Barth points to 'a single human person living in the age of the Roman Empire' as the focus of revelation. Welker argues that this revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ must also be a revelation accomplished by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 'Christology must clarify how

the launch point from which the mediator, the God-man, sets out to accomplish reconciliation between humanity and God as decreed by God the Father. Stated more precisely, it is the election of Jesus Christ as the covenant keeper who is the one true revelation of God in this covenant.

### 5.2.1 The Election of Jesus Christ

With the ontology of Christ's human nature being grounded as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in its union with the Logos, Barth applies this dynamic union of very God and very man to the doctrine of reconciliation. In other words, Barth now answers the question: what does it mean that the humanity of Christ is anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in humanity's reconciliation with God? That being said, there is no place in Barth's Christology where the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis take a higher priority than in the election of Jesus Christ, which without question established Barth as a true Christological innovator.<sup>457</sup> We get an early glimpse into Barth's unique approach to the doctrine of election<sup>458</sup> given its placement in the *Church Dogmatics* as part of the Doctrine of God.<sup>459</sup> However, Barth is clear in expressing his break from Calvin in his reconstruction of Calvin's doctrine of predestination.<sup>460</sup>

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the creative God has revealed Himself in the power of the divine Spirit in Jesus Christ, in this person and this story' (cf. Michael Welker, *God the Revealed*, p. 51).

<sup>456</sup> Barth makes the point that the covenant between God and man is indeed the revelation of the man Jesus of Nazareth. 'Jesus Christ is indeed God in His movement towards man, or, more exactly, in His movement towards the people represented in the one man Jesus of Nazareth, in His covenant with this people, in His being and activity amongst and towards this people' (*CD II/2*, p. 7).

<sup>457</sup> We find this to be especially true given Barth's Reformed presupposition (i.e., based on Calvin's writings as his starting point). Fred H. Klooster observes here that Barth's theology in fact sparked a renewed interest in Calvin where the message of the Reformers was valid 'in a new form' (cf. Fred H. Klooster, *Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination*, p. 12). Louis Berkhof states emphatically that the construction of Barth's doctrine of predestination is not even 'distantly related' to that of Augustine and Calvin (cf. Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 111).

<sup>458</sup> Fred Klooster argues that Calvin certainly did not begin the *Institutes* with the doctrine of Predestination, and never placed it at the head of theology. In fact, in the final edition of 1559 Calvin did not discuss predestination until the end of book 3, about three-fourths of the way into the work in the midst of his discussion of soteriology. Furthermore, it should be observed that when later Reformed theologians discussed predestination along with the decree of God and before discussing creation, they have not followed Calvin's final arrangement of materials (cf. Fred H. Klooster, *Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination*, pp. 14-15). Calvin himself refers to the election of Christ where: 'He is conceived a mortal man of the seed of David. By what virtues will they say that he deserved in the womb itself to be made head of the angels, only-begotten Son of God, etc... But if they willfully strive to strip God of his free power to choose or reject, let them at the same time also take away what has been given to Christ (Calvin, *Institutes* 3.22.1, p. 933). In this sense Calvin understands the election of Christ to be radically different from Barth's.

<sup>459</sup> Barth explains that the doctrine of election must be a part of the doctrine of God because originally God's election is not merely of man, but of God Himself (*CD II/2*, p.3).

<sup>460</sup> Sung Wook Chung sees in Barth's break with Calvin that Barth never thoroughly rejected Calvin's theological insights in relation to the doctrine of election without any effort to 'retrieve and recapture what he saw as Calvin's legitimate arguments.' Moreover, Barth's doctrine of election affirms that theology must begin and end with Jesus

The work has this peculiarity, that in it I have had to leave the framework of theological tradition to a far greater extent than in the first part of the doctrine of God. I would have preferred to follow Calvin's doctrine of predestination much more closely, instead of departing from it so radically...But I could not and cannot do so. As I let the Bible itself speak to me on these matters, as I mediated upon what I seemed to hear. I was driven irresistibly to reconstruction. And now I cannot be anxious to see whether I shall be alone in this work, or whether there will be others who will find enlightenment in the basis and scope suggested.<sup>461</sup>

This reconstruction, as Barth describes it, is centered in God's election of humanity, *and* the election of God Himself, based upon the eternal union of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ.<sup>462</sup> That is, the emphasis and priority of election is the election of the man Jesus of Nazareth, whose humanity is taken up into and assumed by the eternal Logos. And in this union Jesus of Nazareth cannot be understood to exist apart from the Logos, but as such exists as God Himself. It is in this way that God moves towards humanity as true God.

That we know God and have God in Jesus Christ means that we can know Him and have Him only with the man Jesus of Nazareth and with the people which He represents. Apart from this man and apart from this people God would be a different, an alien God. According to the Christian perception the true God is what He is only in this movement, in the movement towards this man, and in Him and through Him towards other men in their unity as His people.<sup>463</sup>

Barth understands Jesus of Nazareth to exist as true humanity. He is true flesh taken up into the eternal Son of God as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, who manifests God's movement towards humanity as the revelation of God Himself. As true man Jesus Christ is the object of God's election of grace, which for Barth constitutes the centerpiece of gospel.<sup>464</sup> As such, the election

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Christ who manifests God's movement towards humanity in the one man Jesus of Nazareth. It is therefore the covenant relationship between God and the man Jesus of Nazareth, as the Son of Man, that humanity can be included in the election of God enclosed in Jesus Christ (cf. Sung Wook Chung, *Admiration and Challenge: Karl Barth's Theological Relationship with John Calvin*, pp. 205-06).

<sup>461</sup> Cf. CD II/2, Preface, x.

<sup>462</sup> William Stacey Johnson argues here that Barth believed the traditional understanding of the doctrine of election needed a 'complete overhaul'. Barth's reconstruction is summed up in the affirmation that in Jesus Christ God is fundamentally 'for' human beings. This divine 'for' is comprehensive in its scope. That is, *everyone* is elected to be reconciled with God in Jesus Christ. Whether everyone will fully *realize* her or his election is another matter. If, however, the doctrine of election meant, as it did for Calvin a 'double predestination,' namely a divine determination of some people for salvation and others for rejection, Barth viewed this as ill-conceived and even hideous. Barth considered God to be a humane God who is committed to humanity (cf. William Stacey Johnson, *The mystery of God: Karl Barth and the Postmodern Foundations of Theology*, pp. 58-59).

<sup>463</sup> Cf. CD II/1, p. 7.

<sup>464</sup> Barth makes it quite clear that the centerpiece of the gospel resides in the election of Jesus Christ. 'The doctrine of the divine election of grace is the sum of the Gospel. It is the content of the good news which is Jesus Christ' (CD



of humanity is a direct result of, and that which flows out of, the election of Jesus of Nazareth as the one who through whom God elects His people.<sup>465</sup>

Again, God elects that He shall be the covenant God. He does so in order not to be alone in His divine glory, but to let heaven and earth, and between them man, be the witness to His glory... He elects the man of Nazareth, that He should be essentially one with Himself in His Son. Through Him and in Him He elects His people, thus electing the whole basis and meaning of all His works.<sup>466</sup>

Barth understands that the benefit of God's elective grace is directed to humanity in His movement towards humanity in the man Jesus of Nazareth. 'All the joy and the benefit of His whole work as Creator, Redeemer and Reconciler, all the blessings which are divine and therefore real blessings, all the promise of the Gospel which has been declared: all these are grounded and determined in the fact that God is the God of the eternal election of His grace' (*CD* II/2:14). The love of God towards humanity is made manifest as event through His divine election of Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, who He sent into the whole world as an expression of His love for the whole world (*CD* II/2:25-26).

But what does it mean that by the grace of God humanity enjoys, and is a participant in, the elective grace of God in the election of Jesus Christ? This is the question Barth wrestles with, and brings to conclusion with his rejection of Calvin's doctrine of election.<sup>467</sup> Barth sought out both theologically and Christologically what proved to be a different understanding of the

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II, 2. P. 10). Paul Molnar reiterates this point in Barth's thinking that it is a matter of God's freedom that He determined to be God for us, and lived out that freedom as electing God and electing man in Jesus Christ. As such, this action and power of God is incontrovertible, which Barth understood as 'the sum of the gospel', and in fact constitutes the strength of Barth's idea of divine self-determination (cf. Paul D. Molnar, 'The Trinity, Election, and God's Ontological Freedom: A Response to Kevin W. Hector', *IJST* 8.3 2006, p. 299).

<sup>465</sup> Berkouwer observes that we find in the Scripture a harmony in the election of Christ. The question that we grapple with is whether Christ could and should be called the foundation (origin) of man's election or whether one should say that He is the executor of election. Barth focuses his criticism of the Reformed doctrine of election especially on this point. Barth argues that the Synod of Dort was correct to reject the view of the Remonstrants according to which Christ was the foundation of election, because of the connection in which this view was brought forward by the Remonstrants with respect to grace being offered to all men making belief or unbelief a deciding factor (cf. G.C. Berkouwer, *Divine Election*, p. 134).

<sup>466</sup> *CD* II/2, p. 11.

<sup>467</sup> David Gibson argues that for Barth, the continental Reformed efforts to understand the witness of Scripture to divine election struggle over whether Christ be understood in relation to the decree of election as 'its foundation, its origin, or merely as its executor?' Barth's exposition of the doctrine of election unfolds against the historical backdrop of a Reformed tradition, which he believes has reduced Christ to the role of election's executor by emphasizing a secret election of the Father. Barth viewed the Reformed doctrine of election as having severed the link between Christ and election, a link which he sought to recover (cf. David Gibson, *Reading the Decree – Exegesis, Election and Christology in Calvin and Barth*, p. 2).

relationship between the election of Jesus Christ and those individuals elected by grace ‘in Christ’ through their faith in the God-man.<sup>468</sup> In other words, Barth understands the eternal decree of God with respect to the election of humanity, as attested to in the Scripture, to find its fulfillment in the man Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>469</sup>

The election is decisively important for each individual, but it does not follow that it is for the individual a character already imparted to him, immanent in him from the very first. It does not follow that it is bound up with his very existence. It is still the activity of the free love of God. As such, it is intended for every man, and it concerns and determines every man. But it does so without necessitating that he should be elected or rejected immediately and in advance. According to Scripture, the divine election of grace is an activity of God which has a definite goal and limit. Its direct and proper object is not individuals generally, but one individual—and only in Him the people called and united by Him, and only in that people individuals in general in their private relationships with God. It is only in that one man that a human determination corresponds to the divine determining.<sup>470</sup>

As Barth explains, the solution to the problem of election points to the man Jesus of Nazareth in whom both sides of predestination (i.e., election and reprobation) are fully realized.<sup>471</sup> That is, God’s predetermined election and rejection is not bound up in each individual of humanity; but rather, in One individual, the One in whom individual people are called and united together in Him.<sup>472</sup> It is in this sense and in this sense only, that Barth’s thinking with respect to the predestination of humanity can be rightly understood. Furthermore, it is in this sense, in the revelation of God in Jesus of Nazareth, that the electing God confronts humanity. Moreover, this

<sup>468</sup> In Barth’s early thinking with respect to Calvin, he argues that it was needful for Calvin to relentlessly champion the doctrine of ‘double predestination’ as the way to preserve Reformed theology against attacks to its survival. Moreover, in the predestination of God is manifested those who are obedient to God, as recipients of the grace of God, which for Barth is the heart of Calvin’s doctrine of predestination (cf. Karl Barth, *The Theology of John Calvin*, p. 78, 118).

<sup>469</sup> David Gibson further argues that ‘For all his independent and creative genius, Barth’s theology is profoundly catholic, soaked in dialogue and debate with centuries of tradition and modulated and Reformed accent’ (cf. David Gibson, *Reading the Decree – Exegesis, Election and Christology in Calvin and Barth*, p. 18).

<sup>470</sup> Cf. *CD II/2*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>471</sup> Barth explains that both election and reprobation are executed Jesus Christ. ‘We can and must say these two things concerning the judgment of God executed in the death of Jesus Christ and the sentence of God revealed in His resurrection, because in both events we are dealing with the execution and revelation of the divine rejection of elected man and the divine election of rejected man. It was in the indissoluble unity and irreversible sequence of these happenings that the reconciliation of the world with God took place in Jesus Christ’ (*CD IV/1*, p. 515).

<sup>472</sup> Barth argues respecting God’s justification of humanity that it is the free grace of God that marks it off from ‘the caprice and arbitrariness of a destiny that apports blindfold its favor and disfavor, which clothes it with majesty and dignity, which gives to the knowledge of faith an infallible certainty—that in the first instance God affirms Himself in this action, that in it He lives His own divine life in His unity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But in it He also maintains Himself as God of man, as the One who has bound Himself to man from all eternity, as the One has elected Himself for man and man for Himself’ (*CD IV/1*, p. 532).

ontology of Jesus Christ in His election clearly embodies the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of the humanity assumed by the eternal Son of God, which in turn serves as the foundation and driving impetus of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation.

In the strict sense only He can be understood and described as "elected" (and "rejected"). All others are so in Him, and not as individuals. It is not right, therefore, to take it as self-evident, as has so frequently been the case, that the doctrine of predestination may be understood and presented as the first and final word of a general anthropology. On the contrary, it is right and necessary to get back from things supposedly self-evident to the true sources, the self-revelation of God and the testimony of Holy Scripture, and to discover the definite form in which the electing God encounters and confronts humanity as a whole, and in which humanity also confronts and encounters the electing God.<sup>473</sup>

The election of God therefore must be God centered (as part of the doctrine of God)<sup>474</sup> rather than anthropologically centered,<sup>475</sup> because for Barth its nucleus is both the subject and object of election in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>476</sup> This answers the question how the eternal will of God, in the election of humanity, is revealed and accomplished.<sup>477</sup> The election of God is indeed the election of God Himself, who in the revelation of the Logos became flesh in Jesus of

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<sup>473</sup> CF *CD II/2*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>474</sup> Barth reasons that 'We cannot be too insistent in the recognition and introduction of it as the presupposition of all God's perfect work (as that which is truly and properly perfect in its perfection). It is because of this that we put the doctrine of election—meaning, of course, this decisive word, this mystery of the doctrine of reconciliation, the doctrine of the election which took place in Jesus Christ—at the very beginning, and indeed before the beginning, of what we have to say concerning God's dealings with His creation. It is for this reason that we understand the election as ordination, as God's self-ordaining of Himself. And it is for this reason, then, that we regard the doctrine of election as a constituent part of the doctrine of God' (*CD II/2*, p. 89).

<sup>475</sup> Douglas R. Sharp argues that with the appearance of the doctrine of election in the doctrine of God Barth suggests 'that it is not possible to know and speak about God without knowing and affirming at the same time that this One is the electing God. Election is in fact the distinctive act by which God is *who* God is.' There is therefore an interrelationship between the doctrine of God and the doctrine of election that demands their treatment in intimate proximity to one another. 'For Barth, the doctrine of God has dogmatic priority over the doctrine of election, and as such it points to the ontic priority of the subject of the doctrine of God.' For Barth, 'the *content* of the doctrine of God has ontic priority, while the *content* of the doctrine of election has noetic priority.' (Cf. Douglas R. Sharp, *The Hermeneutics of Election – The Significance of the Doctrine in Barth's Church Dogmatics*, p. 10).

<sup>476</sup> With respect to Calvin Barth notes that 'We must count it highly in Calvin's favor that methodologically at least he broke with this tradition, treating the doctrine of providence (*Instit.* I, 16-18) in conjunction with that of creation, and the doctrine of predestination (III, 21-24) as the climax of that of the communication of the grace of God manifested and active in Jesus Christ (*CD II/2*, p. 46). It is not surprising, then, that amongst the very orthodox, amongst those who thought that they were following Calvin most faithfully, there took place the converse of a quite distinct subordination of the doctrine of predestination to that of providence' (*CD II/2*, p. 46).

<sup>477</sup> Loraine Boettner argues that the doctrine of predestination represents the 'absolute and unconditional' purpose of God, which is independent of God's creation, and originates solely in the counsel of His will (cf. Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, p. 13). Barth counters that such thinking wrongly begins as if there is no alternative to the assertion that the doctrine of predestination represents the absolute and unconditional purpose of the divine will, independent of all creation, and solely grounded in God's eternal counsel (cf. *CD II/2*, P. 47). Barth goes on to say that it is necessary to consider predestination (and form his own concept of it), given a concept of the deity of God which is true deity because it is 'self-determined and self limited' (cf. *CD II/2*, p. 51).

Nazareth.<sup>478</sup> In humanity's reconciliation with God, the true humanity of the Son is the primary content of God's elective grace. This is a 'trinitarian happening of the life of God, but which all other divine decisions and actions follow, and to which they are subordinated.' This is true history that actually took place in time in the true humanity of Jesus Christ, and is therefore the execution and revelation of...

*the purpose of the will of God, which is not limited or determined by any other, and therefore by any other happening in the creaturely sphere, but is itself the sum of all divine purposes, and therefore that which limits and determines all other occurrence. For God's eternal election of grace is concretely the election of Jesus Christ.*<sup>479</sup>

Barth's convictions here are driven by his own exegesis of Scripture,<sup>480</sup> as well as the ontological fabric of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis realized in this human nature elected by God from all eternity.<sup>481</sup> In the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth Barth sees the absolute union of humanity with God the Son, a theological reality that is grounded in the reality of God's election of Jesus Christ.<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Alister McGrath argues that in Barth's doctrine of election he insists that the concept must not be regarded as a theological abstraction giving testimony to the omnipotence of God. But rather, in the election of Jesus Christ Barth retains the duality of election while altering its traditional meaning (i.e., eternal election or reprobation) (cf. Alister McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, pp. 401-402).

<sup>479</sup> CD IV/2, p. 31.

<sup>480</sup> Sharp also suggests that the credibility of Barth's construction [re-construction] of the doctrine of election depends on the exegetical idea that Jesus Christ is himself the electing God and the elect human. The biblical interpretation that lays the foundation of this reverses the direction taken by previous constructs of the doctrine. It is this reversal that represents the basis for the Christological orientation of the construction. 'Jesus Christ is at the center of the doctrine, not because he is the electing God and the elect human, but because He is the concrete self-revelation of God, and as such he constitutes the only basis on which it is possible to know and say anything at all about the being and activity of God. The exegesis at the basis of this notion is intended to establish the identity of revelation/incarnation and election (or the fact that election constitutes the center of revelation/incarnation), so that it becomes necessary to speak of one of these elements only in terms of, and in direct relation to, the other. The exegesis at this point is meant to demonstrate that revelation/incarnation can be meaningfully grasped only under the rubric of election, and that election cannot be discussed apart from revelation/incarnation. Every component in Barth's doctrine depends ultimately on the exegetical demonstration of the identity of election and Jesus Christ in the biblical witness to God's self-revelation' (Cf. Douglas R. Sharp, *The Hermeneutics of Election – The Significance of the Doctrine in Barth's Church Dogmatics*, p. 129).

<sup>481</sup> Barth states that he must adopt the Reformation thesis, but not without reformulating it. 'But we must ground and formulate it in such a way that on both sides it is treated with the seriousness which it deserves. We must do so in such a way that when we utter the name of Jesus Christ we really do speak the first and final word not only about the electing God but also about electing man' (CD II/2, p. 76).

<sup>482</sup> For Barth, the doctrine of election cannot be understood as a general abstraction of God's elective will. But rather: 'The doctrine of election is rightly grounded when in respect of elected man as well as the electing God it does not deal with a generality or abstraction in God or man, but with the particularity and concretion of the true God and true man. It is rightly grounded when only from that starting-point it goes on to perceive and to understand

For finally, of course, the election has to do with the whole of humanity and therefore each individual, although materially it has to do first and exclusively only with the one man, and then with specific members of the people which belongs to Him, which is called by Him and which is gathered around Him; a people which as such is not identical either with the whole of humanity or with an aggregate of individuals.<sup>483</sup>

Fundamentally, Barth understands the election of God in Jesus Christ to be the consummation of the revelation of God. 'Election is that which takes place at the very centre of the divine self-revelation' (*CD II/2*, p. 59). The election of Jesus Christ is 'obviously' the first and decisive part of revelation in which the real presence of God is made manifest in the world as the eternal decree and eternal self-determination of God (*CD II/2*, p.54).<sup>484</sup> The anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis therefore take on dramatic expression in the election of Jesus Christ who as truly God and truly man embodies both the subject and object of God's elective grace. Viewed in this indissoluble, and eternal union of divinity with humanity, Barth understands the God-man, Jesus Christ, to be the eternal man elected by God from the beginning. And as such, Jesus Christ has been elected by God as the One who will come and keep the covenant necessary to accomplish humanity's reconciliation with God.

As the subject and object of this choice, Jesus was at the beginning... He was at the beginning of all things, at the beginning of God's dealings with the reality which is distinct from Himself. Jesus Christ was the choice or election of God in respect of this reality. He was the election of God's grace as directed towards man. He was the election of God's covenant with man.<sup>485</sup>

### 5.2.2 The Covenant Keeper in Jesus Christ

Karl Barth understands Jesus Christ to be both the subject and object of divine election for a distinct purpose established by the eternal will of God; that is, to fulfill the covenant that God

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whatever there is of consequence about God or man in general; from that starting-point alone, and not *vice versa*' (Cf. *CD II/2*, p. 51).

<sup>483</sup> Cf. *CD II/2*, p. 51.

<sup>484</sup> Cornelis Van der Kooi points to the doctrine of election as the center of Barth's theology. 'One can consider Barth's doctrine of election as the substantive core of his theology'. Van der Kooi argues that if it is true for God as a person in the consummate sense to determine Himself, and that nothing external to Him defines Him, then in the concept of election we find the answer to the question: how God determines Himself. He elects the man Jesus of Nazareth to be in union with His Son. That is, God has chosen His Son to be in union with this man. Therefore, it is in this life of Jesus that it becomes knowable from whom election proceeds. 'That is the ray of light which returns to the electing subject' (cf. Cornelis Van der Kooi, *As in a Mirror – John Calvin and Karl Barth on Knowing God*, p. 368).

<sup>485</sup> Cf. *CD II/2*, p. 102.

made with humanity.<sup>486</sup> We see in Barth's thinking here a direct connection between the election of God and the covenant of God, which is perfectly accomplished and unified in the person of Jesus Christ. Just as the election of Jesus of Nazareth is the center of the gospel, so too, the fulfillment of the covenant is the central theological event that expresses the grace of God in the revelation of Jesus Christ.

To have knowledge of the name of Yahweh, and to that degree knowledge of Yahweh Himself, and to participate in His revelation, is to be a partner in the covenant made by Him. Yahweh is thus God a second time in a very different way in the fact that He elects a people, makes it His people and rules it as His people.<sup>487</sup>

For Barth, the covenant of God as revealed in the Old Testament Scripture is strictly speaking the revelation of God, but revelation in anticipation of the revealed covenant keeper;<sup>488</sup> that is, in the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>489</sup>

The existence of the covenant is the constantly self-renewing command of God. This covenant attested in the Old Testament is God's revelation, because it is expectation of the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is expectation of the revelation of Jesus Christ once for all in its strict genuine historicity.<sup>490</sup>

Moreover, it is in the covenant between God and humanity that judgment becomes event (*CD* I/2:92). In other words, this is the Word made flesh fulfilling the covenant of God in His crucifixion on the cross. This is the hiddenness of God who become another in the suffering servant, in the fulfillment of time, in the fulfillment of the covenant (*CD* I/2:92). It is in the person of Jesus Christ, after Bethlehem, Gethsemane, and Golgotha that the fullness of His

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<sup>486</sup> Barth argues that the election of God is centered in Jesus Christ 'He is the One in whom God elected man as His man and Himself as the God of man from all eternity. Again, He is the One in whom, in relation to whom, according to whose image, God created the heavens and the earth and man. Again, He is the One in whose person God made the eternal covenant of grace with man. In undertaking to become man and to act as the Representative of all men in His death and passion, what He does is simply the fulfilling of the office which, according to the counsel of God (His own as well as that of the Father), is His own office, the office of the Son from the very beginning, from all eternity' (*CD* IV/1, p. 364).

<sup>487</sup> Cf. *CD* I/1, p. 318.

<sup>488</sup> In Jesus Christ as the keeper of the covenant Barth understands: 'Man will have to do with one Man as God's representative, as the upholder and proclaimer of the covenant; he will have to do with a prophet, priest and king. An office of revelation will be set up and exercised. Of this the Old Testament is aware, and so it must be said in this respect that Jesus Christ is its content and theme' (*CD* I/2, pp.83-84).

<sup>489</sup> Barth emphasizes that the Old Testament covenants made with Noah and Abraham, the Deuteronomic covenant, and the covenant at Sinai are historical covenants of promise that point to *the* covenant. In other words the Old Testament covenants await their genuine fulfillment in the revelation of Jesus Christ as the covenant between God and man (cf. *CD* I/2:82).

<sup>490</sup> Cf. *CD* I/2, pp. 81-82.



revelation is unmistakable in His resurrection from the dead. And it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, which embodies the realization of the covenant and the reconciliation of humanity with God. For Barth, this is not a different stage of reconciliation, but simply a different dimension (*CD I/2:111*).

The occurrence of the resurrection is not a second and further stage, but the manifestation of this second dimension of the Christ event. The resurrection is meant when it says in Jn. 1:14: "We saw his glory." The resurrection is the event of the revelation of the Incarnate, the Humiliated, the Crucified. Wherever He gives Himself to be known as the person He is, He speaks as the risen Christ. The resurrection can give nothing new to Him who is the eternal Word of the Father; but it makes visible what is proper to Him, His glory. It is in the limitation, illumination and verification of this event and not otherwise that the New Testament views the passion of Christ. That is why in the passion it sees so powerfully the hiddenness of God. That is why it speaks so inexorably of the passing of this aeon. That is why it is so naturally aware of the necessity of the sufferings of this time. That is why above all it binds men so strictly and universally under the divine accusation and the divine threat. The power of revelation is the power of God's hiddenness attested by Him in this way.<sup>491</sup>

It is here that Barth understands the centrality of the humanity of Christ in the reconciliation of humanity with God that is realized in the fulfilled covenant. The covenants of the Old Testament (understood as covenants of grace), which revealed the promise of God in the hiddenness of the person of God; the doctrines of creation and the last things, the redemption and consummation, provides the perimeter surrounding the heart of the matter; that is, the atonement as the center of the covenant fulfilled in Jesus Christ (*CD IV/1:3*). In Jesus Christ God is humanity, He is 'God with us men'. This embodies is the work of reconciliation in the fulfillment of the covenant between God and humanity. This is the restitution, maintaining, and upholding of fellowship between God and humanity by the removal of its former obstruction that is fulfilled in Jesus Christ in the work of reconciliation. For Barth, this is the fulfillment of the covenant (*CD IV/1:22*).<sup>492</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> Cf. *CD I/2*, p. 111.

<sup>492</sup> John de Gruchy marks out an important point here, that Karl Barth's doctrine of reconciliation was firmly grounded in his Christology, which enables him to distinguish and yet affirm an intrinsic relationship between reconciliation with God and sociopolitical liberation. 'Just as for Barth there is a very close connection between reconciliation and justification, and between justification and social justice, so he dialectically related the gospel of God's reconciliation to the establishment of a just peace in the world'. For Barth, the Christian Church is the 'provisional representative' of the sanctification of all humanity, and therefore God's reconciliation of the world to Himself (cf. John de Gruchy, 'Racism, Reconciliation, and Resistance' in *On Reading Karl Barth in South Africa*, p.



Furthermore, Barth recognizes that this covenant is between God and humanity, a covenant which must be fulfilled by both God and humanity in recognition of their mutual contract.<sup>493</sup> As the servant of God, Jesus Christ stands before God as the representative of all nations, and He stands among the nations as the representative of God, ‘bearing the judgments of God, living and testifying by the grace of God—Himself the Israel elected and called to the covenant and to be the mediator of the covenant’ (CD IV/1, p. 34-35).

He becomes and is man in Jesus Christ, and as such He acts and speaks to reconcile the world to Himself, because He has bound Himself to man by the creation of heaven and earth and all things, because He cannot tolerate that this covenant should be broken. The work of atonement in Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the communion of Himself with man and of man with Himself which He willed and created at the very first.<sup>494</sup>

Ontologically speaking, the covenant of grace is grounded in the revelation of Jesus Christ, ‘in the human form and content which God willed to give His Word from all eternity’. For Barth, this is *the* one revelation of God; in the revelation of Jesus Christ is the revelation of the covenant, ‘of the original and basic will of God’ (CD IV/1:45). This is Jesus of Nazareth taken up into the eternal Word as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, the embodiment of the eternal Son of God in whose revelation fulfills the covenant of God.<sup>495</sup>

Therefore if the covenant of grace is the first thing which we have to recognize and say about God and man in their relationship one with another, it is something which we can see only as it makes itself to be seen, only as it fulfils itself—which is what happens in Jesus Christ—and therefore reveals itself as true and actual.<sup>496</sup>

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146). As the covenant keeper, Jesus Christ therefore embodies reconciliation not only between God and humanity, but between humanity with itself.

<sup>493</sup> Barth refers to ‘what was ‘rightly described’ by the 17<sup>th</sup> century Reformed theologians as a *foedus monopleuron*, and cites Deut. 27:16-19, ‘where the conclusion of the covenant is represented as an act of the law, in which both partners clarify their position and engage in a mutual contract’ (CD IV/1, p. 25). Furthermore, based upon the faithfulness of God, He will see to the fulfillment of the covenant. ‘To His faithfulness—He himself will see to it—there will then correspond the complementary faithfulness of His people. The covenant—God Himself will make it so—will then be one which is mutually kept, and to that extent a *foedus diπλεuρον* (CD IV/1 p. 33).

<sup>494</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 36.

<sup>495</sup> Kevin Hector argues that for Barth, because God is the *God* of the covenant, He remains free. However, because God is the God of the covenant, God’s freedom is freedom for this covenant. In other words, to suggest that God cannot use God’s freedom to bind God-self would be to make God a servant to God’s freedom. Therefore, rather than starting from an abstract assertion of God’s independence, Barth insists that God’s independence must be seen in light of God’s revelation of Christ. In other words, God is free from the world in order to be free for the world as God’s covenant-partner (cf. Kevin Hector ‘God’s Triunity and Self-Determination: A Conversation with Karl Barth, Bruce McCormack, and Paul Molnar’, *IJST*, Volume 7 Number 3 July 2005 p. 256).

<sup>496</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 45.

Barth therefore understands reconciliation to be the fulfillment of the covenant<sup>497</sup> made manifest in the active presence of God in Jesus Christ ‘under this name and in this form, as distinct from His being in Himself as God and within His activity as creator and Lord of the world’ (*CD IV/1:75*). God ‘maintains and continues’ the covenant in a way that accomplishes His eternal will of bringing humanity into covenant with Himself (*CD IV/1:79*).

And in his place Jesus Christ rendered that obedience which is required of the covenant partner of God, and in that way found His good pleasure. He did by taking to Himself the sins of all men, suffering as His death the death to which they had fallen prey, by freely offering Himself as the sacrifice which had to be made when God vindicated Himself in relation to man, by choosing to suffer the wrath of God in His own body and the fire of His love in His own soul.<sup>498</sup>

Consequently, the covenant fulfilled in Jesus Christ is the only means of reconciliation for humanity with God, that which took place in this One who comes to the world ‘directly or indirectly to every man in Him’. In Jesus Christ the world is converted to God,<sup>499</sup> and becomes His friend, no longer an enemy. In Jesus Christ, the covenant that God has faithfully kept, and humanity has broken, is renewed and restored. ‘Representing all others in Himself, He is the human partner of God in this new covenant—He in the authenticity, validity and force of His suffering and dying’ (*CD IV/1:251*). It is therefore in and through the covenant accomplished in Jesus Christ that Barth understands the accomplished history of the binding relationship between God and His elect.

Everything which comes from God takes place “in Jesus Christ,” i.e., in the establishment of the covenant which, in the union of His Son with Jesus of Nazareth, God has instituted and maintains and directs between Himself and His people, the people consisting of those who belong to Him, who have become His in this One. The primal history which underlies and is the goal of the whole history of His relationship *ad extra*, with the creation and man in general, is the history of this covenant. The primal history, and with

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<sup>497</sup> In this context Barth uses two passages from Scripture to develop this argument. He gives precedence to Jn. 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (*CD IV/1*, p. 70). Barth also cites the “parallel saying” of Paul in 2 Cor. 5:19: “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (*CD IV/1*, p. 73).

<sup>498</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, pp. 95-95.

<sup>499</sup> Barth is not advocating here a universalistic understanding of redemption, but is emphasizing the redemption of humanity in this world comes only ‘in’ the covenant keeper Jesus Christ.

it the covenant, are, then, the attitude and relation in which by virtue of the decision of His free love God wills to be and is God.<sup>500</sup>

In this way Jesus of Nazareth is the man, who like us in His creatureliness and fleshliness, does not break, but keeps the covenant of God with His people. The ‘action of His life’ (including His suffering the curse of opposing the covenant of God) is an invasion and conquest of this opposition and tension. ‘He is the man who is faithful both to God and therefore also to Himself, the man who is reconciled with God, the true man, and in relation to all the rest the new man. In this action which is executed by God Himself, present in the person of His own Son, He is—inevitably—the man who is well-pleasing to God. He is the total recipient of the grace of God’ (CD IV/2:30).

Barth obviously understands anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as the ontological basis when he explains that in Jesus of Nazareth God has ‘taken up a being as man into unity with His being as God’ as an act of His divine good pleasure. In this event God assumed true humanity into unity with His divine being as God the Son (CD IV/2:41-42).<sup>501</sup> In this work of reconciling an estranged world with Himself, the Creator willed to also exist as a creature Himself. For Barth, this is the essence of the covenant where the Lord of the covenant also willed to be its human partner and therefore the keeper of the covenant as true humanity in Jesus Christ (CD IV/2:43).

### 5.3 Jesus Christ: The First Adam

Karl Barth denied outright the theological legitimacy of any anthropology divorced from the man Jesus of Nazareth, who as the true humanity is the true standard by which any anthropology must be judged.<sup>502</sup> Therefore, in Barth’s thinking it is not theologically possible to engage in the study of humanity and ignore the source of its reality – *the man Jesus Christ*. As such, the dynamic of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis becomes quite apparent in Barth’s development of the man Jesus

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<sup>500</sup> Cf. CD II/2, pp. 8-9).

<sup>501</sup> Barth alludes here to Jesus Christ taking the form of a bond servant (Phil. 2:7), which he views as a parallel to the Word becoming flesh in John 1:14. The point of emphasis lies in the ‘assumption of flesh’ made manifest in Jesus of Nazareth (cf. CD IV/2, p. 42).

<sup>502</sup> Henri Blocher notes that for Barth, anthropology must be grounded on Christology. Jesus is the true man, but he is so not because our natural essence of humanity reflects His human essence, but because He manifests in His person and Event what genuine humanity really is (cf. Henri A. G. Blocher, ‘Karl Barth’s Anthropology’ in *Karl Barth and Evangelical Theology*, pp. 101-02).

of Nazareth as the first Adam; that is, the first and true humanity.<sup>503</sup> As we shall see this is an important theme in the *Church Dogmatics* developed out of Barth's exegesis of Romans 5:12-21.<sup>504</sup>

For Barth, the recognition that Jesus Christ is truly God *and* truly man means that the humanity of Christ is not simply *a* 'true' man, but *the* 'true' man embodied as Immanuel, as 'God with us'. Even as Adam was created as the first human being in the Genesis account, the humanity of Christ takes the preeminent place as *the* true man taken up into union with the eternal Logos as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. Jesus Christ is the first Adam.<sup>505</sup>

As we have shown Karl Barth's hermeneutic can (and often times does) result in an interpretation of Scripture that departs from the Reformed tradition, which he unapologetically identifies as his own.<sup>506</sup> This is certainly evident in the Doctrine of Reconciliation (*CD IV/1*) where Barth develops Jesus Christ as 'Lord as Servant' and examines the relationship of Adam to Christ in view of the entrance of sin into this world in his exposition of Romans 5:12 – 21. Barth approaches this text and the problem of sin by asking 'Who is Adam to Paul?' and 'What is to him [Paul] the relevant thing in this primitive representation of a humanity which moves in circles in abstraction from the divine will and Word and work?' Barth concurs that according to

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<sup>503</sup> Daniel Migliore observes that Barth admitted in his first lectures on dogmatics in 1924 that Reformed theology distinctively emphasizes the sovereignty of God and the 'radical difference between God and creation', which must be sounded within the ecumenical church if the witness of Scripture is to be taken seriously (cf. Daniel L. Migliore, 'The Spirit of Reformed Faith and Theology', *Loving God with our Minds: the pastor as theologian*, Michael Welker and Cynthia Jarvis, Editors, p. 352). In other words, Barth approaches humanity as a creature of God that is in dire need of relationship with God, which Barth develops in true humanity found in Jesus Christ.

<sup>504</sup> This section also draws heavily upon Barth's essay entitled *Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, wherein Barth further develops his exegesis of Romans 5:12 – 21.

<sup>505</sup> Daniel Price rightly observes Barth's rejection of philosophical existentialism as the premise of theology. For Barth the human being must be considered in the context of his or her relationship to God. That is, in Jesus Christ as the self-revelation of God is the human being redeemed as a creature of God. In relation to Calvin Price states that 'The idea of human beings in dynamic relation to God is one that Calvin began and Barth amplifies; Barth, unlike Calvin anchors his anthropology in the bedrock of Christology' (cf. Daniel J. Price, *Karl Barth's Anthropology in light of modern thought*, pp. 94-100).

<sup>506</sup> In his introduction to Karl Barth's essay on Romans 5:12 – 21 Wilhelm Pauck observes that 'In the course of Christian history, Barth implies, these ideas of linking men's predicament of sin with Adam, the first man, and their hope of freedom from sin with Christ, came to receive a stress far removed from the intention and meaning of Paul.' That is, that Adam, as the father of the race was viewed as the originator of sin, and from whom the whole race fell into perdition through sexual transmission one generation with another. Romans 5:12 – 21 therefore became the basis of one of the most compelling doctrines in the history of Christendom – the union of humanity in Adam, the first sinner, in whom all humanity is condemned. Pauck concludes here that Barth's purpose is to correct this doctrinal tradition by pointing out that Paul is misunderstood unless one recognizes that Paul understands that Christ is the true head all humanity – including Adam (cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, pp. 10 – 11).

verse 12 Adam is the man by whom ‘sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned’. This is how Paul understands Adam, as the ‘exponent of the rule under which all men stand’ (*CD IV/1:512*).

But Barth continues by asking how does Paul know this to be true? In other words, ‘where and how has it impressed upon him its truth and validity, the necessary sequence of the one and the many, of all men in disobedience?’ Barth argues that according to the text of Romans 5:12 – 21, in that ‘first and isolated figure’ and in the race he represents, Paul recognizes a different figure, one who also came directly from God not as a creature only, but as the Son of God Himself. And yet also, made in the likeness of sinful men, the One who completely identifies with the humanity He came to make atonement for.<sup>507</sup>

He, too, was a sinner and debtor, but as the sinless and guiltless bearer of the sins of others, the sins of all other men. He, too, was the representative of all others. The only difference is that He was not like them. He was not a *primus inter pares* in a sequence, He represented them as a genuine leader, making atonement by His obedience, covering their disobedience, justifying them before God.<sup>508</sup>

However, rather than arguing from the presumed parallel between *Adam and Christ* (as usually done), Barth inverts the order and argues from the parallel between *Christ and Adam*. ‘There can be no doubt that for Paul Jesus Christ takes the first place as the original and Adam the second place as “the figure of him that was to come.”’ In other words, in Adam we see the negative side of Jesus Christ (*CD IV/1:513*).

In the unrighteous man as the head of the old race he saw again the righteous man at the head of the new one. And even the term parallel calls for some explanation. It is not

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<sup>507</sup> Barth relies here upon the Scripture in describing the reality of Christ’s humanity. ‘He has taken “flesh and blood” (Heb. 2:14). He has suffered and been tempted (2:18), being made like His brethren in everything (2:17), “feeling for our infirmities” and “in all points like as we are.”’ The community confesses (I Jn. 4:2f, 2 Jn. 7) that Jesus Christ “is come in the flesh.” “God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to condemn sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). In the pregnant words of Jn. 1:14, the Word became flesh. “Flesh” in the language of the New (and earlier the Old) Testament means man standing under the divine verdict and judgment, man who is a sinner and whose existence therefore must perish before God, whose existence has already become nothing, and hastens to nothingness and is a victim to death. “Flesh” is the concrete form of human nature and the being of man in his world under the sign of the fall of Adam—the being of man as corrupted and therefore destroyed, as unreconciled with God and therefore lost. In 2 Cor. 5:21 we have it in a way which is almost unbearably severe: “He (God) hath made Him to be sin who knew no sin”. He has caused Him to be regarded and treated as a sinner. He has Himself regarded Him and treated Him as a sinner. He was made a curse for us, as Paul unhesitatingly concluded from Deut. 21:23 (Gal. 3:13)’ (*CD IV/1*, p. 165).

<sup>508</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 512.

autonomously that the line of Adam and the many who are concluded with him in disobedience runs close to that of Jesus Christ in whose obedience God has willed to have and has had mercy on many and indeed on all. We have only to note how the two are contrasted in vv. 15-17 to see that although they can be compared in form they cannot be compared in substance.<sup>509</sup>

The question at stake for Barth here is: how do we (in view of the testimony of Scripture) define what is true humanity given the creaturely relationship between Jesus Christ and Adam? In other words, in whom is established the true and first humanity? Barth sets out to demonstrate exegetically that the first place rests in the humanity of Christ; whereas, Adam is understood in a figurative sense as a ‘rainbow that reflects the radiance of the sun’. Adam does not stand against it, but is dependent upon it for existence (*CD IV/1:513*).<sup>510</sup>

Is it not clear who and what is the prius and who and what the posterius? Even when we are told in I Cor. 15:45 that Jesus Christ is the *εσχατος Αδαμ*, this does not mean that in relation to the first Adam of Gen. 3 He is the second, but rather that He is the first and true Adam of which the other is only a type. It is in relation to the last Adam that this first Adam, the unknown of the Genesis story, has for Paul existence and consistence, and that in what is said of him he hears what is true and necessarily of himself and all men.<sup>511</sup>

Barth revisits his exegesis of Romans 5:12 – 21 in his essay *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5* (1952) where he argues that the Apostle Paul sees Christ not only as belonging to God and His work, but also distinguished from God with respect to His real human nature.<sup>512</sup> For Barth, Paul puts the man Jesus in His dying and rising on one side, and humanity (in the first place, believers), on the other side. Although Paul speaks of Christ as a human

<sup>509</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 513.

<sup>510</sup> We mark here a clear advance from Barth’s exposition of vv.12-21 as expressed in *Romans II* where Barth describes Adam as a type of the coming man Christ. However, he does not move much beyond the reversal of sin in Christ, which was inaugurated in Adam (*Romans II*, p 164). As a sinner, Adam is ‘the figure of him that was to come. The shadow to which he stands bears witness to the light of Christ’ (*Romans II*, p. 175). Christ is contrasted with Adam as the goal of our movement in faith, who forces a decision between the two factors. ‘By doing this, He is not merely the second, but the *last Adam*’. Barth’s primary concern with respect to vv. 12-21 in *Romans II* is to express the dialectical relationship between the new and the old, between Adam and Christ (*Romans II*, p. 166). We argue therefore that Barth’s subsequent appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to describe Christ’s human nature played an important role in his re-calibration of Christ as the first Adam, and therefore the revelation of real and genuine human nature.

<sup>511</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 513.

<sup>512</sup> David Paul Henry argues that it was Barth’s struggle with the question of ‘anthropology’ that forms part of the context in which *Christ and Adam* was written. Henry goes on to say that the hermeneutic of Christ and Adam can be summarized this way: ‘a genuine understanding of the text is achieved when it is understood from the perspective of faith that focuses on the concrete self-revelation of the Wholly Other God in the person of Jesus Christ’ (cf. David Paul Henry, *The Early Development of the Hermeneutic of Karl Barth as Evidenced by His Appropriation of Romans 5:12-21*, pp. 197, 199).



individual, the existence of this human individual is not exhausted in his individuality. The very existence of this Man manifests the righteous decision of God, which potentially includes an indefinite multitude of other individual people who believe in Him. These are reconciled with God through this one Man who makes peace with God through His death. This means that in His own death Christ makes their peace with God before they themselves have decided for this peace, and separate from that decision. Therefore, in their belief in Christ they are simply conforming to the decision about them that has already been made in Christ.<sup>513</sup>

Barth argues for the priority of the humanity of Christ in relation to created humanity (including Adam), which conforms with, and indeed confirms the ontological nature of Jesus of Nazareth as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. That is, the individual human nature assumed by the Son of God is true human nature such that He fully identifies with the humanity He was created in, so much so, that they are first in Him rather than in Adam. Again, this can only be accomplished given the ontological nature of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of humanity realized in the eternal Logos.

He is an individual in such a way that others are not only beside Him and along with Him, but in their most critical decision about their relationship to God, they are also and first of all *in* Him.<sup>514</sup>

In Romans 5:12 – 21 Barth argues that the Apostle Paul goes further than the first half of the chapter by setting the same material in a ‘wider context’. The focus here is that the *special* anthropology of Jesus Christ (i.e., the one human being for all humanity) also constitutes the secret of Adam, and is therefore the *norm* of *all* anthropology (*Christ and Adam*, p. 36). In this way Barth draws attention to the true parallel that Paul is driving at in this passage. That is, the relationship between Adam and Christ is not expressed in terms of the relationship between Adam and humanity in our ‘true and original nature’, which recognizes in Adam the ‘fundamental truth of anthropology to which the subsequent relationship between Christ and us would have to fit and adapt itself.’ Rather, what Barth understands here is that our (humanity) relationship to Adam is not the primary, but the secondary anthropological truth and ordering principle. The primary anthropological truth and ordering principle is expressed by that

<sup>513</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 34.

<sup>514</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 35.



relationship between Christ and humanity. Adam is described as the type of Him was to come. The key point that Barth makes here is that humanity's 'essential and original nature' is not found in Adam, but in Christ. Adam prefigures Christ, and can only be interpreted in the 'light of Christ' (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 39-40). Yet Barth takes his argument one step further in his understanding of human nature in relationship to Christ where we see an interesting conceptual dynamic of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis expressed. That is, human existence as constituted by our relationship with Adam as sinners and enemies of God in fact has no independent reality of its own. But rather:

It is only an indirect witness to the reality of Jesus Christ and to the original and essential human existence that He inaugurates and reveals. The righteous decision of God has fallen upon men not in Adam but in Christ. But in Christ it has also fallen upon Adam, upon our relationship to him and so upon our unhappy past.<sup>515</sup>

Interestingly, we also see continuity between the reality of Christ's human nature that can only be enjoyed in union with the hypostasis of the Logos, and true human nature that can only be enjoyed in union with Christ. For Barth, Paul's argument in Romans 5 is not about the formal parallel between two sides in isolation, but in a context grounded in their material relationship. The question, therefore, as Barth understands it is not whether Adam is before Christ or Christ is superior to Adam.<sup>516</sup> Paul isn't concerned to argue the two side by side in such a formal relationship, but rather to show that life in 'Christ helps to explain life in Adam' while making quite clear the material relationship of these two parallel sides. Paul identifies on one side the human nature that is not transformed by sin, which demands our recognition of the great disparity of this human nature with the human nature of the other side (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 44-45).

For what we have said about Adam and the rest of us is only valid because it corresponds with what we already know about Christ and the rest of us so it is Christ who vouches for the authenticity of Adam and not Adam who vouches for the authenticity of Christ.<sup>517</sup>

Yet even in the great disparity of these two natures what remains common to them both is that our relationship to Adam is only the type, or likeness of our relationship to Christ. That is, while

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<sup>515</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 41.

<sup>516</sup> Barth cites Romans 5:18-19, 21 in this argument.

<sup>517</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 45.

the same human nature appears in both, ‘the humanity of Adam is only real and genuine in so far as it reflects and corresponds to the humanity of Christ’ (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 45-46).

“The first man is of the earth, earthly, the second man is from heaven.” That is how Paul puts it in 1 Cor. 15:47. Christ is above, Adam is beneath... We are real men in our relationship to Adam, only because Adam is not our head and we are not his members, because above Adam and before Adam is Christ.<sup>518</sup>

The fundamental argument for Barth is that real and genuine humanity is the humanity of Christ.<sup>519</sup> The human nature that we share with Adam is preserved as a ‘provisional copy’ of the real humanity that is in Christ. As Adam’s heirs, as sinners and enemies of God, we are still in this provisional way humanity whose nature reflects the true human nature of Christ (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 46-47).<sup>520</sup>

Paul does not go to Adam to see how he is connected with Christ; he goes to Christ to see how *He* is connected with Adam.<sup>521</sup>

Therefore, the human nature of Christ comes first, and the human nature that we share with Adam comes second. The original relationship between the one and the many is that between the human nature of Christ and the humanity that He created. ‘Our relationship to Adam depends for its reality on our relationship to Christ.’ As a result we find the true and essential nature of humanity not in fallen Adam, but in Christ in whom fallen human nature has been cancelled, and what was original has been restored.<sup>522</sup> In light of this relationship we understand that Adam is true humanity only so far as he ‘reflects and points to the original humanity of Christ’ (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 74-75). This establishes the relational priority of Christ’s human nature that is clearly grounded and made necessary by the ontological reality of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. This union of human nature taken into the divine Logos demands such a priority.

<sup>518</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 46.

<sup>519</sup> Pannenberg identifies this concept in Barth’s thinking where Jesus is ‘the prototypal man’. Jesus is the one who is completely obedient to God, and completely obedient to his fellow human beings. Moreover, Barth expresses conceptually the clear priority of Jesus’ relation to God over his ‘significance for us’. Whereas, the only adequate basis for humanity is precisely in Jesus’ relationship to God (cf. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus – God and Man*, p. 198).

<sup>520</sup> Barth argues here that even the perversity of our human nature cannot destroy its formal structure and its provisional copy of the true human nature in Christ (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 46-47).

<sup>521</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, p. 60.

<sup>522</sup> Henri Blocher agrees that for Barth, ‘we know nothing of what it really means to be a human being before we look to Jesus Christ, and can tell only on the exclusive basis of what we see in him’ (cf. Henri Blocher, *Karl Barth’s Anthropology – Karl Barth and Evangelical Theology*, p. 102).

Jesus Christ is the secret truth about the essential nature of man, and even sinful man is still essentially related to Him. That is what we have learned from Rom. 5:12-21.<sup>523</sup>

Finally and fundamentally, Barth's aim in his exegesis of Romans 5:12-21 is to establish the ontological reality that true humanity is not found in the renewal of fallen nature in Adam, but the renewal of fallen nature in the human nature of Christ.<sup>524</sup>

What is *Christian* is secretly but fundamentally identical with what is *universally human*. Nothing in true human nature can ever be alien or irrelevant to the Christian; nothing in true human nature can ever attack or surpass or annul the objective reality of the Christian's union with Christ... So it is Christ that reveals the true human nature. Man's nature in Adam is not, as is usually assumed, his true and original nature; it is only truly human at all in so far as it reflects and corresponds to essential human nature that is found in Christ. True human nature, therefore, can only be understood by Christians who look back to Christ to discover the essential nature of man Vv. 12-21 are revolutionary in their insistence that what is true of Christians must also be true of men. That is a principle that has incalculable significance for all our action and thought. To reject this passage as empty speculation is tantamount to denying that the human nature of Christ is the final revelation of the true nature of man (*Christ and Adam*, pp. 111-12).

Given Barth's understanding of Christ's humanity as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, his exegesis of Christ as the first Adam is readily apparent. How else can the eternal Logos become humanity other than in the authentic and true form of humankind? The humanity of Adam therefore can only point to, or reflect the true humanity embodied in Jesus Christ.

#### 5.4 Jesus Christ: Humiliation and Exaltation in Convergence

While perhaps not as dramatic as his innovative view of God's election of Jesus Christ, Karl Barth clearly forged his own path in expressing the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ as true God with true man.<sup>525</sup> Indeed, Barth's self-styled appropriation of anhypostasis *and*

<sup>523</sup> Cf. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam – Man and Humanity in Romans 5*, pp. 107-08.

<sup>524</sup> Paul T. Nimmo makes a pertinent point with respect to the humanity of Christ and the freedom He had to obey the will of God. That is, for Barth, the paradigm of 'true freedom-in-obedience' and 'obedience-in-freedom' is revealed in Jesus Christ. As such, being in action of the ethical agent is determined in the being and action of Jesus Christ (cf. Paul T. Nimmo, *Being in Action*, p. 131).

<sup>525</sup> William P. Anderson argues with respect to Barth's innovative approach to the two natures in Christ that 'In Barth, then, the classical doctrine of the two natures and the Reformation concept of the states of humiliation and exaltation have been brought together in a way that marks innovation, for instead of seeing humiliation and exaltation as two successive states, i.e., His state of humiliation followed by His state of exaltation; he sees them as two sides or directions of what took place in Jesus Christ for the reconciliation of man with God. This is His being—humiliation and exaltation—the actuality of Jesus Christ as the very God who humbles Himself and the man who is exalted' (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 139).

enhypostasis given the inseparable aspect of this union makes his doctrine of the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ inevitable, and in fact draws into sharper focus the ontological implications of the union of the divine with humanity.<sup>526</sup>

In view of the immutable Logos who takes upon Himself human nature in becoming Jesus of Nazareth, Karl Barth found inconceivable the notion that in Jesus Christ can be found, at any point in time, where His humiliation can be separated from his exaltation.<sup>527</sup> In other words, the entrance of the eternal Logos into the time and space of this world cannot force upon Him any change to His divine being (hidden as it is), and then be ‘changed back’ at His ascension.<sup>528</sup> For Barth, this view does grave violence to the inseparable nature of the God-man. Barth argues that ‘What the New Testament says about Jesus Christ is all said in the light of Easter and Ascension, that is, in the light of the union, achieved once for all, between the eternal Word and the human existence assumed by Him. God’s Son, so the Christian message runs, is now what we are for all time, nay for all eternity: He is Emmanuel, He is ‘with us always, even unto the end of the world’ (Mt. 28:20), i.e., until we on our side ‘shall be ever with the Lord’ (I Thes. 4:17)’ (CD I/2:165).<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>526</sup> Timothy Bradshaw describes the movement of God’s reconciliation with man as one of the single history that encompasses three movements of moments: ‘firstly, the divine self-abnegation into the contradiction of sinful human form; secondly, the elevation of humanity into unity with yet distinction from, God; and thirdly, the Prophetic forth-telling, or self-interpretation, of this extraordinary reality and miracle of the ‘humanity of God’ (cf. Timothy Bradshaw, *Trinity and Ontology – A Comparative Study of the Theologies of Karl Barth and Wolfhart Pannenberg*, p. 11). This is in concert with Barth’s expression of reconciliation in the three offices of Christ as Priest, King, and Prophet.

<sup>527</sup> Berkouwer notes that the distinction between the humiliation and exaltation of Christ is meant to do justice to the testimony of Scripture regarding the historical progress of Christ’s life from humiliation to exaltation – through suffering to glory. Moreover, ‘Humiliation and exaltation do indeed point to that which was present in the historical reality of Christ’s life, but it is history which can be understood in its deep and universal meaning only on the basis of the divine program. There is a *unique* connection between humiliation and exaltation’ (cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Work of Christ*, pp. 36-37).

<sup>528</sup> In describing Barth’s understanding of the union of Christ’s divinity and humanity Paul D. Molnar states that Barth referred to ‘an assumption of flesh by the Word’ implying that what took place in the incarnation was a miracle. That is, it is in this new and direct act of God in history, the Word ‘did not cease to be God while truly becoming flesh.’ Molnar goes on to argue that ‘There can thus be no hint of a two-stage Christology in Barth’s thought’ (cf. Paul D. Molnar, *Incarnation and Resurrection*, pp. 2-3).

<sup>529</sup> William Stacey Johnson describes Barth’s understanding of the downward movement of humiliation, and upward movement of exaltation in Christ such that: ‘What happens in Jesus Christ is, from one perspective, a humiliation of God, a downward “movement which occurs in Jesus Christ, “the Lord as Servant.” The downward movement is the presupposition of reconciliation, while the elevation of humanity is the “two “states”—the so-called “humiliation” and “exaltation” of Jesus—Barth repudiated such static formulae and preferred to speak instead of two dynamic “directions” (cf. William Stacey Johnson, *The Mystery of God: Karl Barth and the Postmodern Foundations of Theology*, pp. 102-03).

How can that be said, if Christ's exaltation means even remotely the abolition, the laying aside of His lowliness, the reversing of the incarnation, and not on the contrary the revelation of His divine majesty in His lowliness, the resurrection of the Crucified, the triumph of the Word in His actual human existence?<sup>530</sup>

The humility of Christ, therefore, does not flee at His ascension. To speak of Jesus Christ is to speak of the true God who is free to seek and find His own glory. In the freedom of His love He can actually be lowly as well as exalted. Even as the Lord He is for us a servant.<sup>531</sup> 'It is in light of the fact of His humiliation that on this first aspect all the predicates of His Godhead, which is the true Godhead, must be filled out and interpreted'. Positively speaking, God is willing and able in the freedom of His love for humanity to humble Himself as the true God and distinguish Himself from all false Gods (*CD IV/1:130*).<sup>532</sup>

Barth further argues that to speak of Jesus Christ is also to speak of true humanity, One who is limited, One who suffers; but in so doing One who is also exalted by God, as One who is lifted above His limitation and suffering. Nevertheless, as one with God He is free humanity. As a creature He is superior to His creatureliness. Although He is bound by sin, He is quite free in relation to it, because He is not bound to commit it. As true humanity He is mortal, and has died like we must all die. However, in His dying He is superior to death having been rescued from it, triumphant and alive. In all of this Barth understands Jesus Christ as the true God who humbles Himself, and the true humanity who is exalted in His creatureliness above His creatureliness (*CD IV/1:131*).<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> Cf. *CD I/2:165*.

<sup>531</sup> William P. Anderson describes the union of humiliation and exaltation of Christ in Barth's thinking as that which takes place in history. 'That which takes place in this history is the humbling of the deity in that He becomes man, the condescension of the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father; and the exaltation of man to the side of God, for in that God became like man, so man became like God, i.e., he is exalted by the humiliation of God (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 139).

<sup>532</sup> B. B. Warfield similarly recognizes the positive aspect of Christ's willingness to humble Himself despite His 'subsistence in the form of God'. Moreover, Warfield states that though Christ was truly man, He was much more than man according to the teaching of the Apostle Paul. That is, Paul does not teach that Christ was once God but had become instead man; rather Paul teaches that 'though He was God, He had become also man' (cf. B. B. Warfield, 'The Person of Christ', *The Person and Work of Christ*, p. 41).

<sup>533</sup> G.C. Berkouwer also recognizes this union of the humiliation and exaltation in Christ. 'Barth's conception of Christ's humiliation and exaltation does not involve two successive "states" of Christ but rather two *sides* or *aspects* or *forms* of what takes place in Jesus Christ in His effecting of reconciliation between God and man. Humiliation and glorification place us before the *double* activity of Christ in His *one* work. This work cannot be distributed "over two different steps or times of His existence," for His whole existence consists precisely in this double form' (cf. G.C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 133).

Moreover, in His exaltation as humanity He is exalted above us because He is different from us. He is given precedence over us in our common humanity. ‘As God He was humbled to take our place, and as humanity He is exalted on our behalf. He is set at the side of God in the humanity which is ours’. In Him is realized true humanity, and our conversion to God.<sup>534</sup> That which is anticipated in Him is accomplished and revealed. In Jesus Christ God became like humanity, and humanity has become like God. That is; in Him, ‘God was bound’, and in Him, the ‘servant has become a Lord’. In Jesus Christ, just as Godhead is humiliated Godhead, too humanity is exalted humanity (CD IV/1:131).<sup>535</sup>

It is based upon Barth’s understanding of this union, which is derived from the ontology of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, that he rejects the traditional relationship between the two ‘natures’ of Christ (deity and humanity), and the two ‘states’ of Christ (humiliation and exaltation) (CD IV/1:132). But how and to what extent does Barth’s understanding of the humiliation and exaltation of Christ diverge from that of traditional Christology? Barth admits that given the witness of Scripture, the humiliation and exaltation of Christ requires a place in dogmatics, but not as traditionally held, which he lays out in three separate points.

First, in describing what took place in Jesus Christ for the reconciliation of humanity with God, Barth understands that there are two ‘sides or directions or forms’ of the being of Jesus Christ, but not two states. The concepts of humiliation and exaltation in Jesus Christ are forms of action, as the Lord who became servant and the servant who became Lord (CD IV/1:133).<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> William P. Anderson understands in Barth’s thinking that Jesus Christ, Word made flesh is primary and everything else, including the gospel accounts of His life and teachings are secondary in relation to Him. Barth, however, does not construct an abstract doctrine of Christ, but in a novel and interesting way he seeks to combine the Classical doctrine of the two natures and the Reformed doctrine of the two states. ‘It is precisely in this way that the divinity of Christ is defined, so that it is not an abstract and a priori conception of the divine nature, but, in terms of the dynamic concept of exaltation’ (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 125).

<sup>535</sup> G.C. Berkouwer also observes that ‘Christ was not *first* humiliated and *thereafter* exalted. He is the *one* Jesus Christ “from whom nothing was added in His exaltation.” It is evident that in this way Barth *draws the consequences of his view that the being and nature of God are revealed in the humiliation*. From this he concludes to the conception that the *glory* of God is to be found precisely in the humiliation. Because Jesus Christ is the self-humiliating God He is at the same time the exalted man. For this reason humiliation and exaltation may not be temporally separated from each other but must be seen together in the one deed of reconciliation’ (cf. Berkouwer *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 133).

<sup>536</sup> Interestingly, Alister McGrath describes Barth’s understanding of theology as an ascending spiral ‘constructed around the self-expression of God in time, in that Barth’s Christology is essentially concerned with the contemporaneity of ‘above’ and ‘below’ in the history of the humiliation of Christ on the cross.’ In this way incarnation and reconciliation are in effect different sides of one movement of God in Jesus Christ. ‘The diverse aspects and elements of the question of the person and work of Christ are inextricably interwoven, in that God is



But in so doing we were not describing a being in the particular form of a state, but the twofold action of Jesus Christ, the actuality of His work: His one work, which cannot be divided into different stages or periods of His existence, but which fills out and constitutes His existence in this twofold form.<sup>537</sup>

Fundamentally, much like the inseparable but distinctive ontology of His being as very God and very man, and based upon his understanding of the Gospel narratives, Barth does not understand the being of Jesus Christ at any point in time when and where He is not ‘both humiliated and exalted, already exalted in His humiliation, and humiliated in His exaltation’ (*CD IV/1:133*).<sup>538</sup>

Where in Paul, for example, is He the Crucified who has not yet risen, or the Risen who has not yet been crucified? Would He be the One whom the New Testament attests as the Mediator between God and man if He were only the one and not the other? And if He is the Mediator, which one of the two can He be alone and without the other? Both aspects force themselves upon us. We have to do with the being of the one and entire Jesus Christ whose humiliation adds nothing. And in this being we have to do with His action, the work and event of the atonement. That is the first reason for this alteration of the traditional dogmatic form.<sup>539</sup>

Second, and this is an important concept in Barth’s thinking, especially in view of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature, he understands that the doctrine of the two states of Christ must be interpreted in light of the doctrine of the two natures, and vice versa (*CD IV/1:133*).

Similarly there can be no autonomous doctrine of the humiliation and exaltation which took place in Jesus Christ, especially without a reference to what took place in Jesus Christ between God as God and man as man.<sup>540</sup>

Barth does not deny the two states of the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ,<sup>541</sup> but argues that its reality is grounded in the being of Jesus Christ. ‘It is the actuality of the being of Jesus

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merely declaring to us what He had consummated in eternity, by a decree which anticipates everything temporal’ (cf. Alister E. McGrath, *The Making of Modern German Christology 1750-1990*, p. 134).

<sup>537</sup> *CD IV/1*, p. 133.

<sup>538</sup> Anderson identifies Barth’s understanding of both the humiliation and exaltation of Christ as: ‘The fact that Jesus Christ is the active subject in this history, that in Him the humiliated God and the exalted man are one, that He is the God-man, means that He Himself attests to the reconciliation that takes place in this event of humiliation; He is the pledge of it in His existence, its actuality, the truth of it that speaks out, and in this consists His prophetic office and its implications for the anthropological sphere in terms of man’s calling, the sending of the community and the hope of the Christian man. It is in Jesus Christ Himself that man’s justification, sanctification, and calling is true and actual, and therefore applicable to all men’ (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 140).

<sup>539</sup> *CD IV/1*, p. 133.

<sup>540</sup> *CD IV/1*, p. 133.



Christ as very God and very man. We cannot, therefore, ascribe to Jesus Christ two natures and then quite independently two states'. Barth argues that we must explain the mutual relationship of the two natures with the two states of Jesus Christ as very God and very man in view of what takes place as the divine work of atonement in His humiliation and exaltation (*CD* IV/1:133-34).<sup>542</sup>

Third, to explain the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ on the one hand, and his humiliation and exaltation on the other means that in Jesus Christ God demonstrates His sovereign freedom in giving Himself to the limitation and suffering of the human creature (His humiliation)<sup>543</sup> in becoming a servant, and that in Jesus Christ humanity without any restriction upon His humanity, in the power of His deity, is freed from his limitation and suffering. This is not divinised humanity, but humanity set at the side of God – *humanity exalted by God* (*CD* IV/1:133-34).<sup>544</sup>

The humiliation, therefore, is the humiliation of God, the exaltation of man: the humiliation of God to supreme glory, as the activation and demonstration of His divine being; and the exaltation of man as the work of God's grace which consists in the restoration of his true humanity. Can we really put it this way? We have to put it in this way if we are really speaking of the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ of *His* humiliation and exaltation, of *His* being and *His* work.<sup>545</sup>

But how does the Scripture speak to the humiliation of God in a way that parallels Barth's thinking here? Barth turns to the classic hymnal passage of Philippians 2 where Paul speaks of

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<sup>541</sup> Barth fully admits that, 'it hardly needs to be demonstrated that in Phil. 2:6f and indeed all the New Testament Jesus Christ is regarded in the light of these two aspects and concepts. But if there is, it is not something incidental to His being' (*CD* IV/1, p. 133).

<sup>542</sup> GC Berkouwer explains that Barth's modification of the doctrine of the 'two states of Christ' has its inevitable consequences for the doctrine of the 'two natures of Christ'. These cannot be understood in isolation, but are inseparably related. 'In working out this relationship, Barth wishes to abide by the formulation of Chalcedon: *vere Deus, vere homo*. His concern, however, is not to understand this "*vere Deus*" abstractly. *In* the humiliation the real deity is made manifest. It is not true that we can first know God's deity (His omnipotence and majesty) and then later come to an understanding of His humiliation. On the contrary, it is exactly *here*, in His humiliation, that the essence of His deity appears: *vere Deus*. In this humiliation He is also the *vere homo* who is exalted. In this bi-unity the act of reconciliation consists: the humiliation of God and the exaltation of man. According to His deity Jesus Christ did not need and could not receive glorification. He was exalted as man, as the servant who is the Lord. This is an exaltation which did not take place in the resurrection but which was "only made manifest" by it' (cf. GC Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 133-134).

<sup>543</sup> Barth goes on to say that, 'God is not proud. In His high majesty He is humble. It is in this high humility that He speaks and acts as the God who reconciles the world to Himself' (*CD* IV/1, p. 159).

<sup>544</sup> Barth describes this as perhaps the greatest objection that the older dogmatics could bring against his thinking here.

<sup>545</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/1, p. 133-34.

the Son of God ‘being in the form of God’, but emptied Himself from enjoying it, taking the form of a bond servant. Barth argues that the *κενωσις* in fact ‘consists in a renunciation of His being in the form of God alone’ (*CD IV/1:180*).

The decisive commentary is given in the text itself. He did not treat His form in the likeness of God (*το ειναι ισα θεω*) as a robber does his booty.<sup>546</sup>

In other words, in His magisterial glory the eternal Son of God was not ‘bound by His possessions’. He was not bound to exist only in the form of God, ‘different from the creature, from humanity, as the reality which is distinct from God, only to be the eternal Word and not flesh’. So that, in addition to His form in the likeness of God He was free to also subject Himself to humiliation, and in the *κενωσις* take the form of a servant being made like humanity, being found in the likeness of ‘humanity’. And as God, He could be known only to Himself, but unknown as such in the world. This is the hiddenness of His majesty in this alien form. This is God the Son humbling Himself in this form in obedience, even to death on the cross. He humbled Himself in this way without any alteration of His Godhead. This is His self-emptying (*CD IV/1:180*).<sup>547</sup> This is for Barth the reality of the incomparable union of humanity into the Logos as explained by the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of His humanity.

He does not consist in ceasing to be Himself as man, but in taking it upon Himself to be Himself in a way quite other than that which corresponds and belongs to His form as God, His being equal with God. He can also go into the far country and be there, with all that that involves. And so He does go into the far country, and is there. According to Phil. 2 this means His becoming man, the incarnation.<sup>548</sup>

This clearly demonstrates in Barth’s thinking the reality of God’s willing humiliation. In Jesus Christ we are confronted with the revelation of a mystery that offends; that for God it is just as natural to be lowly as it is to be exalted. Therefore, when Jesus Christ chooses to enter into and act upon the world He created, and further to conceal His form of lordship in the form of a

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<sup>546</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 180.

<sup>547</sup> In this respect B. B. Warfield sounds a similar theme in the life of Christ and ‘His life of humiliation, sinking into His terrible death, was therefore not his misfortune, but His achievement as the promised Messiah, by and in whom the Kingdom of God is to be established in the world; it was the work which as Messiah he came to do.’ It is here in Christ’s humiliation that Warfield alludes to Christ’s self designation as the ‘Son of Man’ taken from Daniel’s vision, so that Christ proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah He actually was (cf. B. B. Warfield. *The Works of B. B. Warfield, Christology and Criticism*, p. 161).

<sup>548</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 180.

servant in this world, 'He is not untrue to Himself but genuinely true to Himself, to the freedom which is that of his love'. Even in the form of a servant we have to do with God in His true deity. The humility of His dwelling in Jesus Christ is not alien, but proper to Him. 'His humility is a *novum mysterium* for us', but for Him 'this humility is no *novum mysterium*. It is His sovereign grace that He wills to be and is amongst us in humility, our God, God for us'. He does not become another God, but in giving Himself to us in Jesus Christ He exists and acts as the One He is from all eternity. For Barth, our atonement depends on this reality. The reconciler of the world with God must be God Himself in His true Godhead; otherwise, it is a false reconciliation (*CD* IV/1:192-93). The freedom in which God can be lowly as well as exalted as the reconciler of the world is not an arbitrary ability, but the action of His holy and righteous freedom in the fulfillment of His own decision through the obedience of the Son (*CD* IV/1:194).<sup>549</sup>

What takes place is the divine fulfillment of a divine decree... When we are confronted with this event as the saving event which took place for us, which redeems us, which calls us to faith and penitence, we do not have to do with one of the throws in a game of chance which takes place in the divine being, but with the foundation-rock of a divine decision which is as we find it divinely fulfilled in this saving event and not otherwise. It is therefore worthy of unlimited confidence and only in unlimited confidence can it be appreciated. It can demand obedience because it is not itself an arbitrary decision but a decision of obedience. That is why it is so important to see that this is the character of the self-humiliation of God in Jesus Christ as the presupposition of our reconciliation.<sup>550</sup>

This is God Himself, the subject of the act of atonement, in whose presence and action as the Reconciler of the world coincide, and are indeed identical with the existence of the humiliated and lowly and obedient man Jesus of Nazareth. As true God identical with humanity He humbles Himself, but He does so without contradicting His divine nature, yet in contradiction to 'all human ideas about the divine nature' (*CD* IV/1:199). In giving Himself to human existence and suffering is a matter of the humiliation and dishonoring of God Himself, but without renouncing or losing Himself as God. In His humiliation God remains supremely God, and in the death of

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<sup>549</sup> In his assessment of Barth's understanding of *kenosis* Bruce McCormack explains that for Barth, God does not cease to be God in becoming human. In the person of Jesus Christ Kenosis is realized by addition, not subtraction. Nothing proper to deity is left behind when the Son takes on the form of a servant. Kenosis for Barth therefore becomes a positive rather than negative idea (cf. Bruce McCormack, 'Karl Barth's Christology as a Resource for a Reformed Version of Kenoticism', *IJST*. 8.3 2006, p. 248).

<sup>550</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/1, p. 195.

Jesus He remains supremely alive,<sup>551</sup> He maintains and reveals His deity in the passion of Jesus Christ as His eternal Son. Moreover, in the passion of Jesus Christ takes place the redemptive judgment of God on all humanity (*CD IV/1:246-47*).

To fulfill this judgment He took the place of all men, He took their place as sinners. In this passion there is legally reestablished the covenant between God and man, broken by man but kept by God. On that one day of suffering of that One there took place the comprehensive turning in the history of all creation—with all that this involves.<sup>552</sup>

Barth takes notice of two elements in the event of the incarnation attested in John 1:14. First, he argues that if the accent is put on ‘flesh’ we make a statement about God, and say that without ceasing to be true God in the fullness of His deity, went into the far country by becoming a human in His second person (or mode of being) as the Son. This is not only the far country of human creatureliness, but also of human corruption and perdition. Second, if the accent is put on ‘Word’ we make a statement about humanity, and say that without ceasing to be humanity, who is assumed and accepted in his creatureliness by the Son of God, this Son of Man returned home and His place of true fellowship with God as true humanity (*CD IV/2:20-21*). Again, we see here the clear application of *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* expressed in Barth’s language describing the creatureliness accepted by the Son of God into this indissoluble union.

This is the ‘atonement as it took place in Jesus Christ in the one inclusive event of this going out of the Son of God and coming in of the Son of Man’. Barth explains that in the literal and original sense of reconciliation the word *αποκαταλλασσειν* (to reconcile) means ‘to exchange’. In this way Barth understands the renewal of the covenant between God and humanity in Jesus Christ to consist in this exchange – ‘the *exinanitio*, the abasement, of God, and the *exaltatio*, the exaltation of man’ as it was God who went into the far country, and it was humanity who returns home. This is what took place in the person of Jesus Christ. It is therefore quite obvious at this point to understand Barth’s insistence that it is not a matter of two different and successive actions, but:

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<sup>551</sup> Yet, in the act of reconciliation Barth also implies that in virtue of the unity of divinity and humanity that, ‘In this suffering and dying of God Himself in His Son, there took place the reconciliation with God, the conversion to Him, of the world which is out of harmony with Him, contradicting and opposing Him’ (*CD IV/1*, p. 250-51).

<sup>552</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 246-47.

...of a single action in which each of the two elements is related to the other and can be known and understood only in this relationship: the going out of God only as it aims at the coming in as man; the coming in of man only as the reach and outworking of the going out of God; and the whole in its original and proper form only as the being and history of the one Jesus Christ.<sup>553</sup>

Barth's argument here powerfully demonstrates his understanding of the absolute union of humanity into divinity through the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of the human nature that Christ took upon Himself in the kenosis.

The divine act of humility fulfilled in the Son is the only ground of this happening and being. On this ground the unity achieved in this history has to be described, not as two-sided, but as founded and consisting absolutely and exclusively in Him.<sup>554</sup>

Moreover, in this unity, in this convergence of divinity with humanity, Barth understands there to be a specific individual form elected for this purpose. This form, however, is not merely a human, but 'the *humanum*, the being and essence, the nature and kind, which is that of all humanity, which characterizes them all as humanity, and distinguishes them from other creatures.' In other words, this is:

...the concrete possibility of the existence of one man in a specific form—a man elected and prepared for this purpose, not by himself, but by God (this is the point of the election and calling of Israel and Mary). But in this form it is that which is human in all men. It is the concrete possibility of the existence of a man which will be like the concrete possibility of the existence of all men and in the realisation of which this man will be our Brother like ourselves.<sup>555</sup>

Furthermore, and quite interestingly, Barth expands his application of this union of divinity with humanity, conceptualized as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, to include the union of the *humanum* of all men with God in Jesus Christ.

In Jesus Christ it is not merely one man, but the *humanum* of all men, which is posited and exalted as such to unity with God. And this is case just because there has been no changing of God into a man; just because there was and is not creation of a dual existence of God and a man; just because there is only One here, "the Father's Son, by nature

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<sup>553</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 21.

<sup>554</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 46.

<sup>555</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 48.

God,” but this One in our human likeness, in a form of a servant (Phil. 2:7), in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3).<sup>556</sup>

We note in this context Barth’s specific reference to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature to describe this convergence of the divine Son of God with ‘humanum of all men’, this assumption of humanity by the eternal Logos. This explains how the eternal Son of God can assume true humanity to Himself without doing violence to, or changing in any way, His divine essence, while also existing as a real humanity. We argue that this sense of unity as exemplified in the convergence of humility and exaltation demonstrates the true nexus of Barth’s concept of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in His Christology. Barth explains here that as anhypostasis (i.e., *impersonalitas*) Jesus Christ exists as humanity because He makes human essence His own by adopting and exalting it into unity with Himself. Moreover, this human being also exists as a true humanity, as enhypostasis, in this union with the eternal Son of God (CD IV/2:49).

Barth counters the argument against this ‘theologoumenon’ by arguing that in Jesus Christ we do not have a human being into whom God has changed Himself. But rather we have no less than God Himself, who remaining unchanged unites Himself with this human being. Therefore, as the Son of God, He also becomes this human being, which also becomes His existence for all humanity. This is the humility of the Son of God taking to Himself a ‘concrete possibility of human being and essence elected and prepared by Him for this purpose and clothed it with actuality by making Himself its actuality.’ For Barth, this is the essence of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, for which he can conclude that ‘the protest against the concept of anhypostasis or enhypostasis as such is without substance since this concept is quite unavoidable at this point if we are properly to describe the mystery’ (CD IV/2:49).

## 5.5 Jesus Christ: Integration of Person and Work

For Barth, the absolute union of *very God* and *very man* in the person of Jesus Christ mirrors the absolute union of the *person* and *work* of Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation.<sup>557</sup> At

<sup>556</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 49.

<sup>557</sup> William P. Anderson argues that in Barth’s conception ‘The person and work of Christ are seen as a unity which cannot be divided. The being of Jesus Christ is the history of the unity of the living God and the living man, the content of which history is reconciliation’ (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 139). Anderson goes on to cite Barth in this regard: And what takes place in this history (unity of God and man), and

issue here is a refusal in Barth's thinking to distinguish between the event of Jesus Christ as the revelation of God, and event of Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation. In other words, Jesus Christ exists as the Mediator of reconciliation between God and humanity in the sense that in Him the reconciliation of God and humanity are event, and in this event 'God encounters and is revealed to all humanity as the gracious God and in this event again all humanity are placed under the consequence and outworking of this encounter and revelation' (*CD IV/1:123*).<sup>558</sup>

Even so, Barth acknowledges the conceptual distinction made between the 'person' and 'work' of Jesus Christ, and admits that the two titles offer a doctrinal convenience. The question, however, that Barth endeavors to answer is how can Jesus Christ who in this union of the Logos with true humanity exist strictly in a static and idle being in isolation from His act or work? Stated the other way around: can Jesus Christ be seen in a work and not be identical with it (*CD IV/1:127*)? Barth responds that the answer to this question must be no.<sup>559</sup>

In the Fourth Gospel does the Son of God exist in any other way than in the doing of the work given Him by the Father? Does the Jesus of the Synoptics exist in any other way than in His addresses and conversations and miracles, and finally His going up to Jerusalem? Does the New Testament *kyrios* generally ever exist except in the accomplishment and revelation of His ministry and lordship as such?<sup>560</sup>

Moreover, Barth is careful to point out with respect to the being of Jesus Christ that the Council decisions of Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon 'had a polemical and critical character, their purpose being to delimit and clarify at a specific point'. That is, these church

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therefore in the being of Christ as such, is atonement. Jesus Christ is not what He is—very God, very man, very God-man—in order as such to mean and do and accomplish something else which is atonement. But His being as God and man and God-man consists in the completed act of reconciliation of man with God (*CD IV/1*, pp. 126-27).<sup>558</sup> Barth argues that the doctrine of reconciliation has to do 'wholly and utterly' with Jesus Christ as the active subject. Therefore, the doctrine of reconciliation must be developed 'in the light of definite Christological perceptions and propositions, focusing attention upon Jesus Christ as the beginning and the middle and the end' (*CD IV/1*, p. 125).

<sup>559</sup> With respect to Barth's understanding of the union of the person of Christ with His work, Anderson also argues that: 'The unity of Christology and reconciliation here means that in Jesus Christ we encounter the reconciling God and reconciled man and with both in their unity. "As this one He is the subject of the act of reconciliation between God and all men." The event of the cross is then the fulfilled reconciliation accomplished by the humiliation or condescension of the Son and revealed in the resurrection. In viewing the Christology and reconciliation in this way, i.e., by bracketing the person and the work by interpreting the person by the work and vice versa, Barth reaches back behind orthodoxy to the Reformation and behind the Christology of the Early Church to the New Testament. Further, this interpretation avoids the subordination of the person to the work and having a purely functional Christology on the one hand, and avoids isolating the person from the work in favor of an ontology of Christ's being, on the other. The former is a polemic primarily against Rudolf Bultmann and the latter the form of traditional Christology (cf. William P. Anderson, *Aspects of the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 140).

<sup>560</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 127.



council decisions should be understood as guidelines for an understanding of the existence and action of Jesus, but not be used (as they have been used) to construct an ‘abstract’ doctrine of His ‘person’ (CD IV/1:127).<sup>561</sup> The thrust of Barth’s argument here centers on examining the ‘being’ of Jesus Christ as the mediator of humanity’s reconciliation with God. Ontologically speaking Barth understands the eternal Logos taking to Himself the form of real humanity as *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* is by definition *being in action*. This is the reconciliation of humanity with God by virtue of His advent. His life, passion, death, and resurrection are simply an extension of His revelation of God.<sup>562</sup>

Barth argues that if the doctrine of the work of Christ is separated from that of His person, it will sooner or later raise the question whether or not this work can be understood as that of someone other than the divine-human person. In other words, it becomes a doctrinal abstraction of the work of Christ, which ultimately moves toward some form of ‘Arianism’ or ‘Pelagianism’ (CD IV/1:127-8). We observe here the balance in Barth’s thinking made possible by the *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* of Christ’s human nature. That is, in the Logos becoming flesh can be found no separation between the being of Jesus Christ and His work. This is the ontological reality of the God-man.

What is needed in this matter is nothing more or less than the removal of the distinction between the two basic sections of classical Christology, or positively, the restoration of the hyphen which always connects them and makes them one in the New Testament. Not to the detriment of either the one or the other. Not to sacrifice the Eastern interest to the Western. Not to cause the doctrine of the person of Christ to be absorbed and dissolved in

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<sup>561</sup> In his analysis of Barth’s approach to dogmatics, Louis Berkhof observes that while Barth regards the Creeds as worthy of respect, he refused to ascribe to them authority and regard them as rigid tests of orthodoxy (cf. Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 63).

<sup>562</sup> T. F. Torrance states that Karl Barth employs the *anhypostasis/enhypostasis* and the *hypostatic union* in his Christology based on his conviction of the inherent union of the being and the act of the incarnate Son of God, which demanded that the doctrines of incarnation and the atonement, and thus Christology and soteriology, must be fully integrated. Because the incarnation means God with us and with us as we actually are, God is with us as one of us, and acting for us in our place. Therefore, it must be understood as atoning reconciliation between God and man at work from the very birth of Jesus, reaching throughout His earthly life and ministry, to its consummation in his death and resurrection as one continuous indivisible saving and sanctifying act of God. ‘Regarded in this way the hypostatic union between the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ is the ontological aspect of atoning reconciliation and atoning reconciliation is the dynamic aspect of hypostatic union, while *anhypostasia/enhypostasia* serve to disclose the inner logic of God’s grace running throughout the whole incarnational self-giving of God in Jesus Christ for us and our salvation. Hypostatic union and reconciliation inhere inseparably in one another and are, so to speak the obverse and reverse of each other. That is the basic position that Barth clearly took up in his *Prolegomena to Church Dogmatics*, II/1, and which he developed throughout the whole of Volume IV’ (cf. Thomas F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, p. 201).

that of His work, or *vice versa*. But to give a proper place to them both, and to establish them both securely in that place.<sup>563</sup>

All of this is centered on a proper understanding of the ‘being’ of Jesus Christ – in view of His work of the atonement – that Barth emphasizes based upon three ‘Christological’ aspects, which merge together and become unified in the ‘active person of His personal work’. The first Christological component of the atonement is based upon Jesus Christ as very God. It is God Himself who intervenes in the reconciliation of humanity with God in the ‘cause of the covenant’ by Himself becoming human (*CD IV/1:128*).<sup>564</sup>

He is very God acting for us men, God Himself become man. He is the authentic Revealer of God as Himself God.<sup>565</sup>

Barth once again establishes the active work of God Himself moving towards humanity as the impetus of reconciliation between humanity and God. Although it is the Son of God who becomes flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, He does so in perfect union with God the Father, through the Holy Spirit, in the essence of His being. In Jesus of Nazareth is therefore revealed the glory of the Triune God. It is this One who as part of the divine being and event becomes, and is humanity. As such, the very Godhead, that divine being and event takes part in becoming human (*CD IV/1:129*).

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<sup>563</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 127-8.

<sup>564</sup> Interestingly, Peter S. Oh uses Barth’s doctrine of *Communicatio* to argue how Barth defines the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ. First, the *communicatio idiomatum* presumes a ‘true and full and definitive giving and receiving’ on both sides. This definition alone leaves open the possibility for the divinization of humanity and the humanization of deity, and is therefore not plausible to describe the union of divine and human natures in Christ. Second, Barth refers to the *communicatio gratiarum*, which means ‘the mutual participation of divine and human essence which results from the union of the two in the one Jesus Christ’. This is rejected because insufficient weight is given to the human nature. Thirdly, and the most adequate type of *communicatio* is *operationum*, which refers to ‘operation or action that is geared toward serving and accomplishing its mission’. That is, ‘the hypostatic union of the two natures in the one Jesus Christ is not a synthetic union between the two different types of substance but the common actualization and work between divine action and human action fulfilled and actualized in the one person of Jesus Christ... The operationum is qualitatively different in essence from the idiomatum or gratiarum, which insinuate the static and substantial ontology of the Western metaphysical system that was the main folly and cause of both the Sebellian controversies over the trinitarian issue. The communicatio operationum shows why deification of the human nature and humanization of the divine nature are not adequate explications in dealing with the relationship between the two natures... The communicatio operationum of relational ontology, unlike idiomatum or gratiarum of substantial ontology, maintains the mutual participation and indwelling without losing its own particularities and furthermore forms an asymmetrical bipolar relational unity in tension. This is the very reason why Barth sees ‘the existence of Jesus Christ as His being in His act’ (cf. Peter S. Oh, *Karl Barth’s Trinitarian Theology: A Study in Karl Barth’s Use of the Trinitarian Relation*, pp. 73-75).

<sup>565</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 128.

This means primarily that it is a matter of the Godhead, the honour and glory and eternity and omnipotence and freedom, the being as Creator and Lord, of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is Himself God as the Son of God the Father and with God the Father the source of the Holy Spirit, united in one essence with the Father by the Holy Spirit. That is how He is God. He is God as He takes part in the event which constitutes the divine being.<sup>566</sup>

The second Christological component of the atonement is based on the fact that in Jesus Christ we have to do with a true human being. ‘The reconciliation of the world with God takes place in the person of a man in whom, because He is also true God, the conversion of all men to God is an actual event’. He is true humanity like all other human beings in every respect being made subject to all the limitations of the human condition, yet in a different way than we are as our mediator (*CD IV/1:130*).

Jesus Christ is man in a different way from what we are. That is why He is our Mediator with God. But He is so in a complete equality of His manhood with ours. To say man is to say creature and sin, and this means limitation and suffering. Both of these have to be said of Jesus Christ. Not, however, according to the standard of general concepts, but only with reference to Him, only in correspondence with His true manhood.<sup>567</sup>

The third Christological component of the atonement leads us to the simplest, but also the highest. That is, it is the source of the first two and comprehends them both (*CD IV/1:135*). We see here the key component of the union of the person of Jesus Christ with His work of reconciliation made manifest in His willingness to humble Himself as the God-man. This is for Barth the essence of humanity’s reconciliation with God, which is directly connected to and encompassed in the simultaneous humbling of God and exaltation of humanity in Jesus Christ. This is indeed the outward movement of the Logos becoming the flesh of humanity as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. This is the yes and the no of the possibility of humanity realizing true humanity only through its union to God in Jesus of Nazareth.

As the God-man who humbles Himself and therefore reconciles man with Himself, and as the man exalted by God and therefore reconciled with Him, as the One who is very God and very man in this concrete sense, Jesus Christ Himself is one. He is the “God-

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<sup>566</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 129.

<sup>567</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 131.

man,” that is, the Son of God who as such is this man, this man who as such is the Son of God.<sup>568</sup>

For Barth, this is not a third form of true God and true humanity, but simply their absolute union in the God-man. When the New Testament speaks of Jesus Christ, it speaks to both the One moving from above to below, and the One from below moving up. And in this movement there meets very God who becomes very humanity in Jesus of Nazareth (*CD IV/1:135*).

Both are necessary. Neither can stand or be understood without the other. A Christ who did not come in the flesh, who was not identical with the Jesus of Nazareth who suffered and died under Pontius Pilot, would not be Christ Jesus—and a Jesus who was not the eternal Word of God, and who as man was not raised again from the dead, would not be the Jesus Christ—of the New Testament. The New Testament, it is true, knows nothing of the formulae of later ecclesiastical Christology, which tried to formulate two aspects with conceptual strictness.<sup>569</sup>

Barth understands that the witness of the New Testament is grounded in its object, the human being Jesus, who is Messiah, the Kyrios, in the mystery of His existence. That is, He can be known as Messiah, the Kyrios, only as He reveals it through His Holy Spirit. This is attested to by the New Testament as it speaks of His resurrection from the dead (*CD IV/1:163*). Moreover, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead bears witness to the reality of the God-man made manifest in the flesh, which is indeed the culmination of his work, the definitive witness to the reality of Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God. But as Barth emphasizes here, this revelation can only be made through the Holy Spirit of Christ.

The witness concerns the self-revelation of the Son of God who is identical with this man, not an existing acquaintance with His being and work as such. All such acquaintance with Jesus the Son of God is repudiated. His form as a man is regarded and described rather as the concealing of His true being, and therefore this true being as the Son or Word of God is a hidden being.<sup>570</sup>

It is the Holy Spirit of Christ that ‘lifts the veil’ and uncovers the mystery and true identity of Jesus Christ as very God, who is hidden in the flesh of very humanity. Such is the intertwining nature of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis made manifest in this humanity in the union of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>568</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 35.

<sup>569</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 135.

<sup>570</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 163.

## 5.6 Jesus Christ: Eternal Redeemer

For Barth, the mystery of the union of true God with true man carries with it certain ontological challenges to his Christology, especially in view of his understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. On the one hand Barth can readily deny the Lutheran doctrine that the human nature of Christ is dependent upon His divine nature (i.e., perichoresis) as an obvious denial of the ontological limitation indicative of the reality of Christ's human nature. On the other hand, however, when considering the time / eternity dialectic in view of the absolute union of the divine and human natures, his determination of the *extent* of this absolute union of the God-man is not as simple.

Eternally speaking, the problem that Barth deals with here is the mystery of the father-son relationship, of the eternal Father begetting the eternal Son, and the begetting of Jesus of Nazareth. This becomes an important problem for Barth in view of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. Barth understands that the father-son relationship depicted in the Scripture cannot be understood as figurative language.<sup>571</sup> In the hidden depths of the essence of the God-head the father-son relationship is proper and accurate in describing the reality of the Father and the Son in their relation to each other (*CD I/1*, pp. 432-33).

The mystery of begetting is originally and properly a divine and not a creaturely mystery. Perhaps one ought even to say that it is *the* divine mystery.<sup>572</sup>

Barth describes the mystery of the Father begetting the Son as reaching beyond the creaturely limitations of time and eternity (even in the creaturely nature of Jesus of Nazareth), where the unity of very God and very man transcends the disunity of eternity and time. Therefore, to speak of the eternal Word of God is to speak of Jesus Christ, who as very God and very man conquered time in the atonement (*CD IV/1:51*).

The first and eternal Word of God, which underlies and precedes the creative will and work as the beginning of all things in God, means in fact Jesus Christ. It is identical with

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<sup>571</sup> Hans Küng presents the question this way: Jesus Christ, who has not yet become man, will become man. This is the Word who will be incarnate in whose incarnation is already an eternal reality according to God's eternal decree. Küng cites Rev. 13:8 and I Peter 1:20, which speak to the eternal pre-existence of the redeemer in Jesus Christ. Küng concludes that the redemption in Jesus Christ can be described in Scripture as an *eternal* mystery. Therefore, what occurs in history is the revelation of this eternal mystery (cf. Hans Küng, *Justification – The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection*, pp. 126-27).

<sup>572</sup> Cf. *CD I/1*, p. 432-33.

the one who, very God and very man, born and living and acting and suffering and conquering in time, accomplishes the atonement.<sup>573</sup>

Barth sees here the eternal Word invading time and space and claiming it as His own. In the Word of God becoming flesh, and therefore time, in every moment of His temporal existence, and every point before or after His temporal existence in which He manifested Himself as true God and true humanity – *Jesus Christ is the same* (CD I/2:52).<sup>574</sup>

The Word spoken from eternity raises the time into which it is uttered (without dissolving it in time), up into His own eternity as now His own time, and gives it part in the existence of God which is alone real, self-moved, self-dependent, self-sufficient. It is spoken by God, a perfect without peer (not in our time, but in God's time created by the Word in the flesh, there is a genuine, proper, indissoluble, primal perfect), and for that reason there is coming into the world a future without peer for not in our time but rather in this God's time created by the Word in the flesh there is a genuine, proper, indissoluble, primal future.<sup>575</sup>

To understand Barth's vantage point here in view of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is to start with the eternal Logos, but the Logos that is not isolated from the humanity that He is elected to assume.

For Jesus Christ—not an empty *Logos*, but Jesus Christ the incarnate Word, the baby born in Bethlehem, the man put to death at Golgotha and raised again in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, the man whose history this is—is the unity of the two. He is both at one and the same time.<sup>576</sup>

As very God and very man Jesus Christ is both the 'address of God to man and the claim of God upon man' as the Word of God spoken in His work (as He becomes work), which belongs to Himself as the eternal Son of God prior to us. 'In this He is the pre-existent *Deus pro nobis*.' He

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<sup>573</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 51.

<sup>574</sup> Alister McGrath observes with respect to the anhypostasis and enhypostasis Barth sees a means of safeguarding the essential unity of Jesus Christ with God. Similarly, Barth's frequent insistence that God is the subject of Jesus Christ's actions is articulated in terms of the patristic concept of the 'carrier' of 'bearer'. 'The Word became flesh: not man in general, but the carrier of our human essence (CD IV/2, p.92). Barth's unhesitant affirmation that Christ assumed *fallen* human nature (in other words, the Word became 'flesh' as well as 'man'). God thus performs the actions of Jesus through the human nature which he 'carries', this human nature not being an agent in itself. Barth emphasizes that God acts *directly*, rather than *indirectly*, in Christ. It is not a question of God acting vicariously through Christ, or delegating Christ to act on his behalf with his authority: Christ is God, and as such God may be said to act when Christ acts (CD IV/2, p. 51) (cf. Alister E. McGrath, *The Making of Modern German Christology: From the Enlightenment to Pannenberg*, pp 113-14).

<sup>575</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 52.

<sup>576</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 53.

is there at the beginning of all things, who as the basis and purpose of the covenant is alone the content of the eternal will of God, which precedes the whole being of humanity and of the world, but with a view toward us. As a fellow human being, as the concrete reality and actuality of the promise and command of God, He is in one person amongst us (in one person), very God and very man (*CD IV/1:53*).

Therefore, the Son, in virtue of the free act of the election of grace and keeper of the covenant, is no longer just the eternal Logos, but as very God and very man from all eternity ‘He is also the very God and very man He will become in time’ (*CD IV/1:66*). For Barth, this is the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis clearly marked in the eternal Jesus Christ as the God-man, which is established by God’s eternal decree in the election of Jesus Christ. This is indeed the mystery in understanding the eternal essence of very God and very man, and yet in Barth’s thinking it must be so, and it is the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis that provides the ontological grounding in this mystery.

In the divine act of predestination there pre-exists the Jesus Christ who as the Son of the eternal Father and the child of the virgin Mary will become and be the Mediator of the covenant between God and man, the One who accomplishes the act of atonement. He in whom the covenant of grace is fulfilled and revealed in history is also its eternal basis. He who in Scripture is attested to be very God and very man is also the eternal testamentum, the eternal sponsio, the eternal pactum, between God and man.<sup>577</sup>

Moreover, the reality of very God and very man in Jesus Christ is particularized by His presence in the lowest parts of the earth (Ephesians 4:9), as He tabernacled in the humanity of Jesus (John 1:14), as He dwelt in this one human being in the fullness of His Godhead (Colossians 2:9), and as He demonstrates the exercise of His omnipresence. That is, in Jesus Christ is the ‘perfection in which He has His own place which is superior to all the places created by Him, not excluding but including all other places’. As He who created time out of eternity, He can enter our time of sin and death and be temporal in it, yet without ceasing to be eternal in the time He created (*CD IV/1:187-88*).<sup>578</sup>

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<sup>577</sup> Cf. *CD IV/1*, p. 66).

<sup>578</sup> Barth establishes this point taken from Philippians 2. ‘We have already drawn attention to the twofold *εαυτον* used in relation to the emptying and humbling of the One who exists in the divine form of the divine likeness. Whatever He Himself does, even this, takes place in His freedom, and therefore in unity and not in



Ontologically, Barth does not understand the testimony of Scripture to distinguish between the eternal Son, and the Son known as Jesus of Nazareth. As a case in point Barth cites Hebrews 1:2f where it says of the Son that by Him God created the world, that He is the ‘the brightness of His glory, and the express image of his person,’ and that He upholds ‘all things by the word of his power.’ And then immediately after Barth explains we are told that ‘when he had by himself purged our sins he sat down on the right hand of the majesty in high,’ and is ‘made much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.’ Barth concludes that further statements concerning His superiority to the angels would be inexplicable if reference is made only ‘abstractly’ to the eternal Son of God, particularly in view of the ‘supposed’ need to stand in this exaltation and the inheritance of a more excellent name (*CD* IV/2:34).

Indeed, how could the eternal Son of God as such be put (in v. 1) in the same series with the fathers by whom God spoke at sundry times and in divers manners? How could it be said of Him as such that God “hath in these last days spoken unto us” by Him? This is only explicable if, as is expressly emphasized in v. 6, the reference is to the One who is brought into the world of men, the *οικουμένη*, and therefore to the One who is both Son of God and Son of Man. As such He is the One by whom God made the aeons, and who upholds all things by the Word of His power.<sup>579</sup>

Perhaps even more to the point is Barth’s understanding of the predestinarian passages in the New Testament that emphasize the blood, the putting to death of Jesus Christ, which is obviously inexplicable if they refer to ‘α λογος ασαρκος, and not to the eternal Son of God and therefore also to the Son of Man existing in time.’ In I Peter 1:29, the One who ‘verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times,’ must be the same One of whom it is said to those reading verses 18-19 that they are redeemed with His blood ‘as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.’ Furthermore, in Ephesians 1:4, the One that God ‘hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him’ is the same One of whom it is said in verse 7 that we have redemption through His

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contradiction with Himself, as a self-giving but not as a giving up, not at the cost of Himself, not as an entering into conflict with Himself” (*CD* IV/1, p. 188).

<sup>579</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 34.

blood.<sup>580</sup> Barth also cites Revelation 13:8 where the book of life that is written before the foundation of the world is called the book of the Lamb slain (*CD IV/2:34*).

Barth, however, makes it clear that Jesus Christ is a real human being in a way that distinguishes Him from the reality of all other humanity. Jesus Christ is a true human being, and as a true human being He is the One who *was* Head before the foundation of the world.<sup>581</sup> He reveals Himself to be the presupposition of the being of all humanity, who lays claim on their existence, and whose promise for them is valid from the beginning (*CD IV/2:36*).<sup>582</sup> Again, this is only possible in the ontological mystery of the Logos becoming real humanity, in whose humanity is taken up into and fully assumed by the Logos in such a way that real humanity becomes eternal God.<sup>583</sup>

But the inconceivable actually takes place in this man, and is declared and revealed and to be conceived as such. The attempt to interpret it as a mystery cannot on this account be omitted. If it is, the concept of the true humanity of Jesus Christ which is grounded in this mystery will be incomplete. We shall not really know what we are saying when we try to understand and explain the reconciliation of the world with God in relation to reconciled man. Reconciled man is originally the man Jesus. And the man Jesus is originally reconciled man because and as God Himself, without ceasing to be God, willed to be and

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<sup>580</sup> Mary Kathleen Cunningham examines Barth's development of the eternal being of the God-man Jesus Christ in Barth's exegesis of Ephesians 1:4 (and other passages). The point of emphasis here is the extent in which Barth sees the "eternal" unity of the God-man in Jesus Christ. 'To defend his contention that the New Testament writers had Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, in mind and not a logos asarkos, Barth draws attention to the soteriological setting of the New Testament passages linking Christ and creation. Barth believes that the New Testament authors, by clearly identifying the pre-existent Christ with the Redeemer, could not be speaking of the eternal Son as such but rather of Jesus Christ Himself, "the Mediator, the One who in the eternal sight of God has already taken upon Himself our human nature."' (cf. Mary Kathleen Cunningham, *Karl Barth's Interpretation and Use of Ephesians 1:4 in His Doctrine of election: An Essay in the Relation of Scripture and Theology*, p. 27).

<sup>581</sup> Barth's argument that Jesus existed with the Logos (as pre-existent) may be observed as one of the more challenging aspects of his Christology. John Knox states as an axiom that the true humanity of Christ demands that He was not pre-existent in His flesh before His incarnation (cf. John Knox, *Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. 93). And yet for Barth, the axiomatic presumption of Knox must be reversed. If indeed the humanity of Christ was taken up into union with the eternal Logos, how then do we understand the eternal Logos as not existing, from all eternity, as the eternal God-man?

<sup>582</sup> Alister McGrath argues that for the later Barth his 'Christological concentration' finds its expression not in the history of Jesus of Nazareth in general, or even in the crucifixion or resurrection in particular, but in the preexistent Christ, the Christ before all eternity. It is this divine freedom of revelation (God's freedom to reveal or not reveal Himself) that is preserved by the eternal generation of the Son. McGrath concludes that as a result Barth is obliged to assert that Christ is equally present at every stage of redemptive history (cf. Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Die: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, pp. 399-400).

<sup>583</sup> 'Relatively the most appropriate characterization and description of this free act of God which took place in Jesus Christ is perhaps that God assumed a being as man into His being as God' (*CD IV/2*, p. 41).

actually became man as well, this man Jesus. The existence of this man is the work of God in which, without ceasing to be God, He willed to be and became also this man.<sup>584</sup>

For Barth, the reality of the eternal Logos becoming real humanity as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis also carries with it certain ontological challenges with respect to the humanity of Christ and His presence among His people. The question here that Barth wrestles with is if in the revelation of God, Jesus Christ manifests the special presence of God in creation, how then do we understand the eternal presence of the God-man embodied in Jesus Christ?<sup>585</sup>

If we maintain that the path from the presence with which God is the triune God is present to Himself leads directly and in the first instance to His special presence in creation, we must now take a further step back backwards, making a fresh distinction, and upholding the position that strictly speaking it leads directly and in the first instance, within all the special presences, to His proper presence in Jesus Christ. It is as the One who is present here in this way that He is the God who is specially present in Israel and the Church, and as such generally present in the world as a whole and everywhere.<sup>586</sup>

Barth understands that in God's adoption of Israel and the Church, which takes place in Jesus Christ 'there was and is now as then a real presence of God in places on earth.' As the presupposition of this adoption, Jesus Christ has part in the divine Sonship, '*gratia unionis*'. As such, Israel and the Church 'received [it] from His fullness' and in this way are accepted into Him as the children of God 'by Him and from Him, and therefore with Him, participating in the real divine presence' (CD II/1:485).

Therefore, in the person of Jesus Christ is not simply the mere presence of God, but God Himself, who as very God and very man is one whose divinity and humanity are unmixed and at the same time undivided. And as Barth explains, it is based upon this union that the adoption of Israel and the Church becomes a reality.<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>584</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 40.

<sup>585</sup> 'He is first present here, and then (either before or after Jesus Christ's epiphany) there and everywhere. He is present here primarily, there and everywhere secondarily. He is really present to Israel and the Church as the body of humanity taken up into His covenant, but He is present in Jesus Christ as the head which constitutes and controls this body' (CD II/1, p. 458).

<sup>586</sup> Cf. CD II/1, p. 484.

<sup>587</sup> Barth explains that Jesus Christ is 'not simply one of the beings—perhaps the highest—which can confess in general or in particular that it lives and moves and has its being in God. On the contrary, in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9)...And Col. 1:9 is even more emphatic... Both sentences undoubtedly speak of a bodily and proper dwelling of God in His fullness or completeness...And they say of this bodily and proper dwelling of God Himself, which otherwise takes place only beyond heaven and the heaven of heavens, that in Jesus

In the person of His Son, in Jesus Christ, God is not merely present to man as He was and is in Israel and Church, around Him and in Him in the special form of a blessing or injunction, an abasement or an elevation, a declaration or an act in connexion with his work of revelation and reconciliation. But God is Himself this man Jesus Christ, very God and very man, both of them unconfused and unmixed, but also unseparated and undivided, in the one person of this Messiah and Saviour. This is what cannot be said about any other creature, even any prophet or apostle. Jesus Christ alone is very God and very man. And it is on the basis of this unio, but clearly differentiated from it, that there is an adoptio.<sup>588</sup>

For Barth, the reality of coalescence between Christ's divinity and His humanity must be taken seriously and understood for what it is as the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Although the humanity of Christ is *real* humanity, it is humanity taken up into union with the eternal Son of God. As such, this humanity exists beyond the confines of every other human creature.<sup>589</sup> Jesus of Nazareth exists not only as a true human being, but also as true God in the reality of this union, and in His participation in the eternal nature of God. Given Barth's grounding of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the human nature of Christ, how could it be otherwise?

If we take the reality of the human nature of Christ seriously in its unity with the divine nature, if we free ourselves of all gross or refined Docetism, if we give John 1:14, "and dwelt among us" its full value, there is no room for the old error of God's non-spatiality, and we understand the reality with which scripture can speak of the spatiality of God in the whole width of His revelation (both before and after the epiphany of Christ), and in His ubiquity in the world.<sup>590</sup>

For Barth, the reality of the union between divine and human natures in Jesus Christ is eternal, which means it cannot be limited by time and space. Moreover, it is based on the reality that the Word dwelt among us as real humanity. Therefore, if this union truly manifests the revelation of God to the world in the flesh of Jesus Christ, the humanity taken up into that union cannot be separated from the divine nature it has been united together with. This must be so; otherwise,

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Christ as His dwelling it is present not merely, as elsewhere, as the presupposition of His dwelling in creation, but as itself His dwelling even in creation' (CD II/1, p. 486).

<sup>588</sup> Cf. CD II/1, p. 486.

<sup>589</sup> Barth's unusual position with respect to the human presence of Jesus taken up in the Logos demonstrates his willingness to reformulate the Reformed understanding of the union of very God and very man in Jesus Christ. This in fact becomes axiomatic for Barth based upon his appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. Francis Turretin certainly speaks for the traditional Reformed theology when he argues that it is a radical error to assume that there is a twofold kind of presence with respect to Christ's body. This is contrary to the nature of a true body and cannot be admitted (cf. Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, Vol. 3. p. 509).

<sup>590</sup> Cf. CD II/1, p. 486.

there is not real union of divine and human natures in Christ. This is the indissoluble union of divine and human natures undergirded by the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

## 5.7 Conclusion

It is well recognized that Karl Barth takes a unique and many times innovative approach to Christology that clearly departs from the Reformed tradition. Yet, Barth does not waver in understanding himself to be a Reformed theologian. He is therefore not marking out a different theology that stands contrary to the Reformed tradition or the Chalcedon understanding of Jesus Christ as very God and very man. Nevertheless, Barth is quite willing to articulate the union of the humanity of Christ with the divine Logos in a way that reformulates Reformed tradition based upon his own reading of the Scriptures and his appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. We argue that the impetus of Barth's innovative approach to Reformed Christology is grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

As we have shown, Barth's conceptual understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is an ontological reality that he clearly applies throughout the doctrine of reconciliation. As such, we see a unifying principle that binds together the person of Jesus Christ as true God and true man with His role as mediator of the covenant in reconciling humanity with God. Furthermore, in Barth's unique appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis we find a coalescence of divinity with humanity that provides a dynamic flexibility to express Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation.

For Barth, because the humanity of Christ is not isolated in His union with the Logos, Jesus of Nazareth not only becomes the Logos in the revelation of God, but He assumes the attributes of God in this union. He is the subject and object of divine election, the One in whom both election and reprobation is meted out. He is very God, as the Logos in the election of Jesus of Nazareth, and He is very man, as Jesus of Nazareth, having been elected as the mediator of the covenant between God and humanity. He is the first Adam, the authentic humanity assumed by the Logos for whom the second Adam can only reflect in his fallen state.

As Jesus Christ, He invades time and space having humbled Himself as the eternal Son who goes into a far country, and He returns home as exalted humanity, glorified in His union with very God. As very God and very man His work as the mediator of reconciliation is simply an extension of His being as the God-man. His work therefore cannot be separated from His being. Jesus Christ must be eternal God in every respect because He is the eternal redeemer.

All of these things reflect the coalescence of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ that Barth clearly develops based upon his own exegesis, and grounded in his unique understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. That being said, Barth's exegesis of the Scriptures should not be taken lightly, but in fact take the highest priority in his theology – particularly in the *Church Dogmatics*. Barth is very clear to map out and defend his Christology based upon his exegesis of the Scriptures, which he endeavors to understand just as they are written. This certainly holds true for Barth's appropriation of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ, which he understands to be consistent with the testimony of the Scriptures.

## Chapter Six – Barth’s Christological Method in View of Chalcedon: Its Nuance and Complexity

### 6.1 Introduction

Karl Barth’s expression of the humanity of Christ as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis reaches its apex in the Doctrine of Reconciliation of the *Church Dogmatics* where he develops Jesus Christ as the *Servant as Lord* (CD IV/2).<sup>591</sup> More specifically stated, it is in the *Homecoming of the Son of Man* – in Christ’s exaltation as true Humanity – where Barth emphasizes the human nature of Christ being brought into union with the divine nature as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in dialogue with the Chalcedon definition of the two natures.<sup>592</sup> Having established Barth’s thematic expression of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the coalescence of the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ, as the mediator of reconciliation, we now turn to Barth’s further

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<sup>591</sup> While Paul Dafydd Jones agrees that the ‘anhypostasis/enhypostasis formula’ marked a ‘defining moment’ in Barth’s early theological development, he argues that is Barth’s creative construal of the *communio naturarum*, *communicatio idiomatum*, *communicatio gratiarum*, *communicatio operationum/apotelesmatum*, that represents a highpoint of his mature Christology. For Jones, while Barth’s Christology and theological epistemology ‘took its bearings’ from Heppes’s *Reformed Dogmatics*, in his mature Christology Barth departs from the ‘older dogmatics’ in favor of his own reflections. Jones understands that the anhypostasis/enhypostasis pairing continues to be a ‘fairly incidental purpose’ when it comes to Barth’s positive explication of Christ’s being and act. ‘Claims about the standing of Christ’s humanity are useful, but less important than descriptions of what the humanity does – namely, participate increasingly in the ontological complex existence in Jesus Christ and play an indispensable role in the event of revelation’ (cf. Paul Dafydd Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, p. 147). We argue against Jones’ conclusion that Barth de-emphasizes of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in his mature Christology. As we have already demonstrated, the consistent theme throughout the development of the Barth’s Christology is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, which is undergirded by the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature (Chapter 4). Furthermore, we have shown how Barth thematically developed the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the coalescence of Christ’s divinity and humanity in His role as the mediator of reconciliation (see Chapter 5). We will further argue in this chapter that it is in fact the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis dynamic, which serves as the ontological foundation by which the *hypostatica unio* is actualized in the ‘doing’ of Jesus Christ, and subsequently realized in the *communio naturarum*, *communicatio idiomatum*, *communicatio gratiarum*, etc. Moreover, while Barth certainly had many points of variance with traditional Reformed theology, and although he first become acquainted with anhypostasis and enhypostasis in Heppes’s, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Barth made this theologoumenon his own in his understanding of the humanity of Christ (as clearly demonstrated in his unique coupling of these terms), which he consistently understood throughout his *Church Dogmatics* as the foundational aspect for understanding the union of divinity and humanity in Christ.

<sup>592</sup> Adam Neder makes the point that considering Barth’s most detailed development of the hypostatic union is given in CD IV/2, (36-116), it is rather odd that so little study has been devoted to it (cf. Adam Neder, ‘History in Harmony: Karl Barth on the Hypostatic Union’, in *Karl Barth and American Evangelicalism*, p. 148). Neder makes an interesting point here particularly in view of the importance that anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis play in this context.



expression of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as ‘being in action’ made manifest in Jesus Christ in his dialogue with Chalcedon’s definition of the two natures of Christ.<sup>593</sup>

In the Doctrine of Reconciliation Barth first develops the humanity of Christ as *The Lord as Servant* (CD IV/1) in the humiliation of His divine essence in His Priestly office. Barth now transitions to the exaltation of the humanity of Christ as the *Servant as Lord* in His Kingly office<sup>594</sup> in close proximity to the famous Chalcedon two-fold definition of the two natures as: unconfused, immutable and indivisible, inseparable. This is a critical point of Barth’s ontological development of the humanity of Christ because he now deals specifically with what it means for the human essence of Christ, as the Son of Man, to be brought into union with His divine essence. Moreover, Barth also considers what it means for the exalted Son of Man to be brought into union with the *Triune God* in dialogue with the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures.<sup>595</sup>

Our objective in this chapter is to: 1) evaluate Karl Barth’s interpretation of the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures in Jesus Christ given the backdrop of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of His human nature; and 2) examine how Barth uses the concept of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in his critique of the Chalcedonian definition of two natures, which becomes the ontological grounding to explain the act of God’s revelation of Jesus Christ in the *hypostatica unio*.

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<sup>593</sup> Adam Neder recognizes the importance of speaking of Jesus Christ’s history as the inseparability of being and act, where we see the two-fold movement of divine humiliation and human exaltation. This understanding is critical in understanding Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation between God and man (cf. Adam Neder, ‘History in Harmony’, in *Karl Barth and American Evangelicalism*, p. 151).

<sup>594</sup> In Barth’s treatment of Jesus Christ as the Son of Man David Mueller makes mention of the ‘Direction of the Son’. Because the eternal Son became real humanity in the incarnation, as the Son of Man Jesus is the brother of all humanity from whom the power of His existence gives humanity a new direction through His life, death, resurrection, and exaltation to the Father (cf. David Mueller, *Karl Barth*, p. 133).

<sup>595</sup> Barth takes quite seriously the Council of Chalcedon’s definition of the two natures of Christ given the Trinitarian complexity of humanity being brought into union with the Logos. Michael Welker comments here that the creeds of the ancient church hold true to the notion that Christ’s true humanity must be stressed along with his divinity. This position, however, resulted in some ‘extremely awkward doctrinal formulations that initially demanded the articulation of an (ultimately Trinitarian) *self-differentiation within God* without abandoning the doctrine of the *one God*. The task, namely, to grasp and articulate at once both the unity and difference between Jesus Christ’s divinity and humanity, was to be accomplished by what is known as the *doctrine of the two natures*’. Barth’s point of departure in his own clarification of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum is that Christ’s divinity cannot be understood as an apotheosis, that is, as the divinization of an individual human being (cf. Michael Welker, *God the Revealed*, p. 263-64).

## 6.2 How Did Karl Barth Interpret Chalcedon?

As the Council at Chalcedon set out to sharpen the ontological definition of Jesus Christ as very God and very man, it did so in the knowledge that the ontology of the two natures of Christ remains a mystery.<sup>596</sup> In the same vain Barth approaches Chalcedon's definition of the two natures of Christ with the understanding that within this union is embodied a mystery that can only be fully comprehended by God Himself.

Primitive Christology...did not intend to solve the mystery of revelation and its formula about the two natures of Christ, which was clarified at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. It began and ended with the realisation that this simply was impossible. Its purpose in this formula was not to explain this fact (*CD* I/2:126).<sup>597</sup>

Furthermore, Barth argues that Church confessions like that of Chalcedon are limited with respect to the conclusions they are able to draw because they are responding to a specific point of Church doctrine, at a specific point of time, and should not be understood as building blocks to construct an abstract doctrine of the person of Christ.

We must not forget that if in the doctrinal decisions of Nicea and Constantinople and Ephesus and Chalcedon it was a matter of the being of Jesus Christ as such, these decisions had a polemical and critical character, their purpose being to delimit and clarify at a specific point. They are to be regarded as guiding lines for an understanding of His existence and action, not to be used, as they have been used, as stones for the construction of an abstract doctrine of His "person."<sup>598</sup>

Although Barth judges Chalcedon's definition of two natures to be 'factually correct and necessary', he argues that it should not be understood as an absolute and fully comprehensive statement of the union of two natures in Jesus Christ as testified in the Scriptures. This is an important observation to make because while Barth agrees with the decision at Chalcedon, he further argues that there is more that must be said concerning the union of divinity with humanity in the person of Jesus. That is, based upon Barth's understanding of Scripture, the doctrine of the

<sup>596</sup> As a general principle Barth understands the necessity and legitimacy of confessional statements and their expressions of the Christian faith, which were demanded under certain circumstances in response to new questions directed at somewhat ambiguous older confessions. This is how 'the Nicene Creed came to stand alongside the Apostles', the Niceno-Constantinopolitan alongside the Nicene, the Ephesian and Chalcedonian alongside the Niceno-Constantinopolitan' (*CD* I/2:627).

<sup>597</sup> Barth cites Arnold Gilg, "Weg und Bedeutung der altkirchlichen Christologie," in *Jesus Christus im Zeugnis der Heiligen Schrift und der Kirche*, 1936 pp. 91-178.

<sup>598</sup> *CD* IV/1, p. 127.

two natures of Jesus Christ must not be understood as an autonomous one, but in relationship to the divine *action* that takes place in Jesus Christ as the revelation of God.<sup>599</sup>

And the more exact determination of the relationship between God and man in the famous Chalcedonian definition, which has become normative, which has become normative for all subsequent development in this dogma and dogmatics, is one which in our understanding has shown itself to be factually correct and necessary. But according to our understanding there can be no question of a doctrine of the two natures which is autonomous, a doctrine of Jesus Christ as God and man which is no longer or not yet related to the divine action which has taken place in Him, which does not have this action and man as its subject matter. There is no such doctrine in the New Testament, although we cannot say that the New Testament envisages the being and relationship of God and man in Jesus Christ in any other way than it became conceptually fixed in the doctrine of *the two natures*.<sup>600</sup>

Barth's concern here is not to deny Chalcedon's definition of the two natures, but to more precisely explain what it means to say that Jesus Christ exists in two 'natures'. For Barth, one of the great mysteries of the incarnation is the fact that divinity condescends to unite itself to humanity despite the antithetical relationship of the One to the other.<sup>601</sup> Therefore, to say that the natures of divinity and humanity are simply joined together in Christ raises the obvious question: what do we mean when we speak of 'nature' in this context? Barth addresses this open ended question left by Chalcedon with more precise language explaining the union of divine nature with human nature in Jesus Christ. As we shall see, Barth's concern is to further develop the concept of two natures defined at Chalcedon based upon the *hypostatica unio*, which is grounded in his understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.<sup>602</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> Barth's conceptual understanding of divinity and humanity (of very God and very man) in Jesus Christ axiomatically points to the action of God in the revelation of Jesus Christ, as Barth clearly explains in the *Dogmatics in Outline*. 'Very God and very man. If we consider this basic Christian truth first in the light of 'conceived by the Holy Spirit', the truth is clear that the man Jesus Christ has His origin simply in God, that is, He owes His beginning in history to the fact that God in person became man...He is God Himself. God is one with Him. His existence begins with God's special action; as a man He is founded in God, He is true God' (cf. Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, pp. 96-97).

<sup>600</sup> *CD IV/1*, p. 133.

<sup>601</sup> Gustaf Wingren remarks that in general Barth does not describe the relationship between God and man as an antithesis in the sense of hostility. That is, while God's revelation itself indicates the differences between God and humanity it also at the same time discloses God's will to come into fellowship with humanity (cf. Gustaf Wingren, *Theology in Conflict*, pp. 24-25).

<sup>602</sup> In explaining Barth's understanding of how the humanity of Christ is the humanity of God, Adam Neder describes Barth's affirmation of anhypostasis or impersonalitas of the human nature of Christ. That is, 'Jesus Christ exists as a man only as and because the Son of God exists as a man.' (cf. Adam Neder, 'History in Harmony', *Karl Barth and American Evangelicalism*, p. 158. The emphasis of Neder's argument, however, rests on anhypostasis,

After the conflicts and decisions of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, the older doctrine and theology of the church came to speak predominantly of the two “natures” of Christ. But this conception was exposed to serious misunderstanding and showed itself to be at least in serious need of interpretation. This does not mean that we have to abandon it. But we have to remember that it is fatally easy to read out of the word “nature” a reference to the generally known or at any rate conceivable disposition of a being, so that by the concept “divine nature” we are led to think of a generally known or knowable essence of deity, and by that of “human nature” of a known or knowable essence of man, the meaning of the humanity of Jesus Christ—for this is our present concern—being thus determined by a general anthropology, a doctrine of man in general and as such.<sup>603</sup>

Given the context of Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation in the *The Homecoming of the Son of Man*, Barth approaches the first part of the Chalcedonian definition with its intent to guard against the over-emphases of Alexandria.<sup>604</sup>

The first part of the Chalcedonian definition is relevant in this connexion with its safeguarding against the excesses of Alexandrian theology. One and the same Christ, the only-begotten Son and Lord, is to be confessed in two natures [unconfused] and [immutable], and therefore without any idea of commixture of the two or a changing of the one into the other.<sup>605</sup>

Barth grants the mystery of this union of genuine divine and human essence, and further argues that as *event*, ‘on the other side of this event and being’ it must be equally emphasized that this union of the Son of God with human essence is real and indestructible. In this way Barth approaches Chalcedon through the lenses of the revelation of God in the flesh of Jesus Christ, where Christ’s human nature, the Son of Man, must be understood conceptually as enhypostasis and enhypostasis in its union with the Son of God.

The mystery of the incarnation consists in the fact that Jesus Christ is in a real simultaneity of genuine divine and human essence, and that it is on this presupposition that the mutual participation is also genuine. But we must now lay an equally strong emphasis on the other side of this event and being. As it proceeds from the union and unity of the Son of God and human essence, it is also clear that the union of His divine

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which is disconnected from its dual formulation with enhypostasis as Barth emphasizes in the Doctrine of Reconciliation.

<sup>603</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 26.

<sup>604</sup> Barth clearly understands the dialectic relationship between the Alexandrian and Antiochian views of the two natures defined at Chalcedon and works through the Chalcedon definition of the two natures with this in mind.

<sup>605</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 63.

and human essence in that two-sided participation—although it does not become unity—is a real and strict and complete and indestructible union.<sup>606</sup>

How is this union to be understood in the Chalcedonian context? Barth wants to make clear that this union of divine and human essence in Christ is real and penetrates both sides of the equation. In other words, Barth understands that in Jesus Christ, as the God-man, the human essence fully participates in the divine essence, and the divine essence fully participates in the essence of humanity. Barth characterizes this as a ‘radical affirmation’ that the divine and human essence is really and completely brought into union in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Therefore, not only must Chalcedon be interpreted in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as event, but also in the union of this human essence as the Son of Man, as it participates in the divine essence in this union.<sup>607</sup>

There is no element of human essence which is unaffected by, or excluded from, its existence in and with the Son of God, and therefore from union with; and participation in, this divine essence. Similarly, there is no element of His divine essence which the Son of God, existing in human essence, withdraws from union with it and participation in it. We shall have to say what this union and two-sided participation can and cannot mean in face of the indissoluble distinction of divine and human essence. For the moment however, we must take the radical affirmation that the divine and human essence are indivisibly united in the one Jesus Christ who is the Son of God.<sup>608</sup>

Barth once again emphasizes that the revelation of God made manifest in Jesus Christ does not simply exist as one person who combines divine and human essence in His being. The emphasis is laid upon the eternal Christ who has taken to Himself human essence. ‘We do not have here a dual, but the one Jesus Christ, who as such is of both divine and human essence, and therefore the one Reconciler, Saviour and Lord. He pre-existed as such in the divine counsel’ (*CD* IV/2:64). This is how He was born, lived and died. This is how He appeared in His resurrection. This is how He reigns at the right hand of the Father (*CD* IV/2:64).

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<sup>606</sup> *CD* IV/2, p. 64.

<sup>607</sup> Otto Weber remarks that for Barth, the revelation of God is reality based upon God’s willingness to and freedom to ‘traverse the boundary between him and us.’ This is His humiliation towards us. That is, in the mode of the Son’s existence ‘the one God became man’. Humanity therefore can be like Him as His adopted children in Him who is the eternal Son. This is understood within the context of God’s revelation as event. Moreover, God’s revelation is made known to us in a form that is known to us – as humanity. Revelation is to be spoken of as a utterly free grace occurring in the world in which God, veiling Himself, encounters us where we are, and in a way that we can understand Him (cf. Otto Weber, *Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatics – An Introductory Report*, pp. 42-43).

<sup>608</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 64.

In the second part of the Chalcedonian definition Barth describes its safeguards against the excesses of Antioch where he emphasizes that the positive meaning of the two natures of Christ are indivisible and inseparable, which affirm that even in their distinctiveness, these two natures are totally and definitely united in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God and our Lord is to be confessed in His two natures [indivisible] and [inseparable], and therefore without any idea of a divisibility of one or the other, or a separability of the one from the other. The positive meaning of the definition on this side was that even in their distinctiveness the divine and human essence were and are united in Jesus Christ, not merely in appearance but in fact, not merely partially but totally, not merely temporarily but definitely.<sup>609</sup>

In this context Barth explains that the reality of the divine essence unites itself to real human essence, which in turn marks the divine humiliation and the exaltation of humanity in their mutual participation in each other. As such, they ‘cannot be separated for all their distinctiveness.’ This is the single event and being of Jesus Christ (*CD IV/2:65*), which for Barth clearly speaks to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of the Son of Man in union with the Son of God. This is the ontological basis for expressing the mystery of the incarnation.

If we believe in Jesus Christ, in this One, we do not decide for one element in this history to the obscuring or even exclusion of the other, but we accompany the whole course of the history in its unity and totality. The mystery of the incarnation consists in the fact that the simultaneity of divine and human essence in Jesus Christ is real, and therefore their mutual participation is also real.<sup>610</sup>

Given Karl Barth’s interpretation of Chalcedon’s definition of the two natures of Jesus Christ we make two observations. First, Barth agreed (at least conceptually) with the Chalcedonian language that defined Jesus Christ as one Person who exists in two natures, which remain unconfused and immutable, as well as indivisibly and inseparably united in their union. As such, Barth recognizes the intent of Chalcedon to guard against the excesses of both Alexandria and Antioch, which he accepts as accurate and normative for the Church and orthodoxy on the whole. This is especially true in view of irresolvable mystery of the person of Jesus Christ who exists in this union of God and humanity.

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<sup>609</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 65.

<sup>610</sup> *Ibid.*

Second, we understand in Barth's thinking not simply the being of Jesus Christ as the God-man, but His being as event in the union of two natures. That is, in the person of Jesus Christ is made manifest the action of God in His movement toward humanity as an act of free grace. We argue that in Barth's thinking this is not a contradiction (or correction) of the Chalcedonian language of the two natures, but a more precise understanding of what it means that Jesus Christ fully embodies very God and very man in His being. For Barth, the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature undergirds his insistence that the person of Jesus Christ must not be viewed statically in His being as the God-man, but dynamically in the event of God's movement of grace towards humanity.

### 6.3 Barth's Appropriation of Anhypostasis *and* Enhypostasis with a View to Chalcedon

#### Christ's Assumption of Human Nature

The dynamic of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis creates in Barth's Christology an ontological precision that moves beyond the 'static' definition of Chalcedon's two natures, where the humanity of Christ exists as a fluid movement of God's revelation by taking human essence to Himself in the event of God's reconciliation of humanity with God.<sup>611</sup> This is the exaltation of humanity in Jesus Christ as the Son of Man. This is the revelation of God made manifest in Jesus Christ as event. For Barth, the exaltation of humanity in Jesus Christ is not contrived humanity, nor humanity that we cannot understand as humanity, but the 'human nature' of humanity,<sup>612</sup> which for Barth simply means:

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<sup>611</sup> Hans Vium Mikkelsen suggests that at first glance Barth's Christology appears to be very orthodox in both form and content, and is structured according to Chalcedon's distinction between the two natures of Christ. Mikkelsen further argues, however, that Barth revitalizes this pattern in a way that reformulates Chalcedon in such a radical way that it can no longer be claimed as a Christology that is a "simple" extrapolation of the tradition (cf. Hans Vium Mikkelsen, *Reconciled Humanity*, p. 148).

<sup>612</sup> With respect to the elements of reconciliation in Barth's theology Bruce Marshall identifies three elements of significance for salvation: 1) descriptions of Jesus Christ as a particular person; 2) characteristics of the event of reconciliation that are applied to Jesus; and 3) descriptions of the immediate action and presence of God in the person of Jesus Christ made manifest in the incarnation. Marshall goes on to argue that in describing Jesus as 'The Lord as Servant' or 'The Servant as Lord' or 'The True Witness' Barth is not using identifying descriptions of Jesus Christ. That is, these descriptions still lack the kind of descriptive uniqueness to identify a particular person (cf. Bruce Marshall, *Christology in Conflict – The identity of a Saviour in Rahner and Barth*, p. 121). Barth of course would disagree with this conclusion by the simple fact that the particular person (i.e., humanity) of Jesus Christ cannot be understood, or described, outside its union with the divine Logos in whose particular existence he enjoys as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in this union.



...that which makes a man man as distinct from God, angel or animal, his specific creatureliness, his *humanitas*.<sup>613</sup>

With Chalcedon's definition of the two natures in the foreground, and the dynamic of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the background, Barth explains that the human nature assumed by Christ is the same human nature (even human nature stamped by sin) that is enjoined to all created humanity. This is real human nature that the Son of God assumes to Himself.<sup>614</sup> This is adamic human nature that is brought into union with the Logos necessary for the Mediator of reconciliation between God and man. Barth's conceptual language of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is quite clear, which explains how the Logos assumes to Himself sinful human nature (*that which is not real*), and makes that human nature *reality* by virtue of its union with the Son of Man. This certainly points back to Barth's understanding of Jesus Christ as the first Adam as the genuine human being. This is foundational to Barth's understanding of the Christological concept of '*vere Deus* which declares the equality of Jesus Christ with God, but with an explanation of the *vere homo* which declares His equality with us' (CD IV/2:26).

By "human nature," however, we have also to understand the "flesh," human nature as it is determined and stamped by human sin, the corrupt and perverted human nature which stands in eternal jeopardy and has fallen a victim, not only to dying, but to death, to perishing. It is human nature as characterized in this way, adamic human nature, that the Son of God assumed when He became man, and it is as the bearer of this human nature that He was and is the Mediator and Reconciler between God and us. Jesus Christ was and is very man in this twofold sense. The answer is both right and necessary. It is right as a description of the likeness between the humanity of Christ and that of other men. It is necessary as the delimitation which we have to make with this description against every kind of docetic Christology, in which His likeness with us is either crudely or cunningly denied. His humanity is made a mere appearance, and His deity is therefore dissolved into a mere idea, and the atonement made in Him into a philosophical theory or myth. Every sound christological discussion will necessarily start not only with an explanation of the *vere Deus* which declares the equality of Jesus Christ with God, but with an explanation of the *vere homo* which declares His equality with us. And it will always

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<sup>613</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 26.

<sup>614</sup> G. C. Berkouwer categorizes Barth as an emphatic defender of the impersonal human nature of Christ, and raises the question 'whether in the confession of the "*vere deus, very homo*," and in our theological reflection on it, are we confronted by the doctrine of the "anhypostasy"?' However, Berkouwer recognizes that Barth understands the human nature of Christ to exist in and through the Word, and concludes that by means of the "anhypostasy" Barth wants to resist the danger of Ebionitism which proceeds from the personality, the apotheosis, of a man who so impressed people that they cry out 'He is God'. Therefore, according to Barth, the point at issue is not at all a form of Docetism but there is a rejection of an abstract, isolated existence of the man Jesus of Nazareth (cf. G. C. Berkouwer, *The Person of Christ*, p. 309).

have to keep this at the back of its mind, and take it into the strictest account in the later development of the doctrine.<sup>615</sup>

Barth argues: how can Christ be the true mediator of reconciliation for sinful humanity if He does not Himself share in the same sinful flesh? Even so, as Jesus existed in sinful human nature He did not commit any act of sin during His life. In this dialectical sense Jesus Christ must be understood as existing both in the likeness of sinful human flesh, and not in the likeness of sinful flesh.

But if we keep to the particular humanity in which Jesus Christ gives Himself to be known, we must first make the formal differentiation that it is characterized by the fact that it is both completely like and yet also completely unlike that of all other men (CD IV/2:27).

But even like us as our Brother, he is also unlike us in the human nature that He assumes. He is like us in our creaturely form and its determination by sin and death in our opposition to God. This is the form of humanity that has fallen away from God, and who exists under the wrath of God as adamic humanity. This is the situation of Christ's humanity, who as the good and genuine creature of God is the flesh that the Son of God made His own when He became human essence. In this way Christ is very man in this contradiction of human existence. Otherwise, He would not be like we are in this totality, and He could not be our Lord and Saviour as our Head (CD IV/2:27).

But the fact that He is not only *a* true man, but *the* true man, is not exhausted by His likeness with all other men. He is not only completely like us, but completely unlike us—and it is only when we add this complementary truth that we realise the full meaning of the *vere homo* as it applies to Him. But the unlikeness consists in what must necessarily become, and has become, of “human nature” when He assumed it in likeness with us, of flesh when it became His. It relates to the particularity of the history which took place when He became man, and still takes place as He, the Son of God, is man.<sup>616</sup>

Barth therefore understands Jesus to be like us as our Brother in a dialectic relationship with us. He is totally different from us by the fact that in the history of His human existence there also took place an ‘exaltation of the humanity which as His and ours is the same’ (CD IV/2:28). Barth

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<sup>615</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, pp. 25-26).

<sup>616</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 27.

goes on to explain that while Jesus Christ shares our human essence, He does so on a higher level, which dialectically means that while His humanity is like ours, it is also not like ours.<sup>617</sup>

It means the history of the placing of the humanity common to Him and us on a higher level, on which it becomes and is completely unlike ours even in its complete likeness—distinct from ours, not only in degree but in principle, not only quantitatively but qualitatively, He confronts us in this unlikeness because and as He is the Son of God and man as such, like us as such.<sup>618</sup>

But Barth goes further. He expresses the humanity of Christ who, as the divine subject humiliated Himself in becoming humanity, and as such – and in the same action – was exalted in this humanity as the Son of Man.<sup>619</sup>

As this divine subject which became a man—humiliating Himself as such—He exists in a history which cannot be that of any other man. What else can the Son of God who humbled Himself as man become and be but the Son of Man who is not divinised but exalted to the side of God? What else can the Lord who became a servant become and be but the servant who became a Lord? This is the secret of the humanity of Jesus Christ which has no parallel at all in ours. This is the basis and power of the atonement made in Him on this side—as it is seen below from man.<sup>620</sup>

As the Lord as Servant Barth emphasizes in Jesus Christ's divine being that as *homoousia* with the Father who sent Him as true deity, He took to Himself the lowliness of humanity in His obedience as Jesus of Nazareth. Ontologically speaking (and in view to the Chalcedonian definition of *homoousia*), Jesus Christ manifests both the humiliation of deity and exaltation of the Son of Man without distinction in time or event, as the keeper of the covenant.<sup>621</sup> As we have

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<sup>617</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer sounds a very similar chord with Barth here with respect to Jesus Christ as the new humanity. 'Jesus Christ *pro me* is pioneer, head and firstborn of the brethren who follow him. This *pro me* is thus related to the historicity of Jesus... Jesus Christ is for his brethren by standing in their place. Christ stands for his new humanity before God. But if that is the case, he is the new humanity. Because he acts as the new humanity, it is in him and he is in it. Because the new humanity is in him, God is gracious towards it in him' (cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Christ the Center*, pp. 48-49).

<sup>618</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 28.

<sup>619</sup> Barth emphasizes that as the Son of Man, this exaltation of humanity is made manifest in Jesus Christ. Barth can now clearly emphasize the exaltation of the humanity of Christ based upon the coalescence of humility and exaltation revealed in Jesus Christ as the mediator of reconciliation.

<sup>620</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 28.

<sup>621</sup> Karl Barth understood the notion of the exaltation of humanity to also apply very personally to believers in Christ. In his well known sermons entitled *Deliverance to the Captives*, which were primarily preached at the prison at Basel, Barth does not hesitate to express the 'freedom' enjoyed by those who experience the reality of the promise of Christ: 'Nevertheless I am continually [with thee]'. Barth encourages his listeners 'Do you realize that the Bible is a *book of freedom*, and that divine worship is a *celebration of freedom*?... This is what happens to us when we leave behind the 'with myself' and break through to the conviction: 'nevertheless I am continually *with thee*. What kind of a 'thou' is this? Is it a man? Yes indeed, someone with a human face, a human body, human hands and a human

already shown, this marked the distinction of Jesus Christ as the Mediator of reconciliation; as the keeper of God's covenant as very God and very man. Therefore, Barth has already prepared the way for his understanding of the correlation of the humanity of Christ with the Chalcedon definition based upon the ontology of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as the Mediator between God and humanity.<sup>622</sup>

He is in our lowliness what He is in His majesty (and what He can be also in our lowliness because His majesty is also lowliness). He is as man, as the man who is obedient in humility, Jesus of Nazareth, what He is as God (and what He can be also as man because He is it as God in this mode of divine being). That is the true deity of Jesus Christ, obedient in humility, in its unity and equality, its *homoousia*, with the deity of the One who sent Him and to whom He is obedient.<sup>623</sup>

Barth now addresses the ontological implications of what it means for the eternal Logos to assume to Himself the nature of humanity. As the incarnate Logos, in whose existence as the Son of God became the existence of humanity, we do not have 'two existing side by side or even within one another'. Rather, Barth insists upon the fact that there is only one God the Son. There is no one and nothing that exists either alongside or in Him (*CD* IV/2:50). This is the dialectical union of divine essence and human essence in the Son of God.

But this one exists, not only in His divine, but also in human being and essence, in our nature and kind. He exists, not only like the Father and the Holy Ghost as God, but in fulfillment of that act of humility also as man, one man, this man. The Son of God becomes and is as men become and are. He exists, not only inconceivably as God, but also conceivably as a man; not only above the world, but also in the world, and of the world; not only in a heavenly and invisible, but in an earthly and visible form. He

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language. One whose heart bears sorrows—not simply his own, but the sorrows of the whole world. One who takes our sin and our misery upon himself and away from us' (cf. Karl Barth, *Deliverance to the Captives*, 'Nevertheless, I am Continually with Thee', pp. 16-17).

<sup>622</sup> The functional character of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is quite obvious here within the context of the revelation of God in the 'Word became flesh' (see Chapter 4).

<sup>623</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/1, p. 204). Barth argues that the 'older dogmatics' understood that the Son of God 'really condescended to us and became like us, one of us, and took our place to do for us what only God could do for us, by assuming our "human nature," by existing in it and therefore as a man like ourselves, by dying and rising again, so that, placed as one of us at the right hand of God the Father. He became and is and will be to all eternity the Mediator between God and us men. By the "human nature" in which He who is very God is also very man we have to understand the same historical life as our own, the same creaturely mode of existence as an individually distinct unity of soul and body in a fixed time between birth and death, in the same orientation to God and fellowman' (*CD* IV/2, p. 25).

becomes and is, He exists—we cannot avoid this statement; to do so would be the worst kind of Docetism—and objective actuality.<sup>624</sup>

It is the actualized union of divinity and humanity that occupies Barth's thinking here. In view of the 'older dogmatics' Barth notes that the *unio hypostatica* was also referred to as the *unio personalis* or *immediata*, and played a key role in the classical doctrine of the incarnation in all the great confessions. Moreover, Barth takes notice here of the *communio naturarum*, the communion of the divine and human essence in Jesus Christ without change and admixture, and without cleavage and separation. But it is the *unio hypostatica* that takes precedence in Barth's thinking with a clear view towards the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature, which remains the ontological grounding for such a union. At bottom, Barth is concerned with the union 'made by God in the hypostasis (the mode of existence)' of the Son of God and the man Jesus of Nazareth (*CD* IV/2, p. 51).

But however we may understand and expound these points in detail, they all rest on the "hypostatic" union, i.e., the union made by God in the hypostasis (the mode of existence) of the Son. They all rest on the direct unity of existence of the Son of God and the man Jesus of Nazareth. And this is produced by the fact that in Himself this One raises up to actuality, and maintains in actuality, the possibility of a form of human being and existence present in the existence of the one elect Israel and the one elect Mary. He does this by causing His own divine existence to be the existence of the man Jesus (*CD* IV/2:51).

Therefore, with respect to an understanding of the *unio immediata*, which includes a *communio naturarum* Barth argues that these expressions of the union 'does not remove or alter either the divine essence of the Logos or the human essence existing by Him and in Him'. This is the centrality of the divine-human actuality in Jesus Christ (*CD* IV/2:51).

Barth distinguishes the *unio hypostatica* from all other unifications and unions, which therefore must be understood in its utter uniqueness; that is, it is *sui generis*, which can only be understood in terms of itself.<sup>625</sup> As such, Barth notes that this union of divine essence with human essence cannot to be understood as an analogy to the Triune union of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in

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<sup>624</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 50.

<sup>625</sup> Barth makes specific reference to Heinrich Heppes's *Reformed Dogmatics*, from which he develops the *unio hypostatica* in this context, but with the caveat that 'I am not slavishly bound to it in detail' (cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 52).

the one essence of God.<sup>626</sup> This is an important distinction because the union of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ is not a *unio coessentialis* that consists in a twofold existence of the same being.<sup>627</sup> This must be true because the divine essence is superior to the human essence that it assumes to itself in Jesus Christ.

It is the unity of the one existence of the Son of God with the human being and essence which does not exist without Him. Above all, although the Son is equal with God the Father and God the Holy Ghost, He is not of equal being and essence with the humanity assumed by Him.<sup>628</sup>

This is the foundational point for Barth in the union of divine and human essence in Jesus Christ; that the ‘divine humanity of Jesus Christ is not a relationship between two equal or even similar partners’. This is a union based upon the mercy of God demonstrated by His inconceivable condescension in turning towards the antithetical character of humanity by becoming real humanity in Jesus of Nazareth (CD IV/2:52).<sup>629</sup> Moreover, because this union of divinity and humanity is not one of a *unio essentialis* (as Barth clearly defends in the *Calvinistic Extra*), Barth goes so far as to question whether the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ is in fact not surpassed by His ongoing providential care, which He never relinquishes. ‘Is it really anything more than one event within the general *concursus divinus* (C.D., III, 3 par. 49, 2)?’ Barth’s answer is that as *enhypostasis*, the humanity of Christ is sharply differentiated from the divinity of Jesus Christ through which God maintains and rules the world in virtue of His creative action as God, who

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<sup>626</sup> Benjamin C. Leslie notes that for Barth trinitarian theology represents the claim not only of the objectivity of God but of an objectivity that transcends human subjectivity. Therefore, the necessary distinction between the economic activity of the Trinity; that is, God entering into human history as Jesus of Nazareth, and the immanent Trinity; God in His eternal self-sufficiency, is a distinction necessary if the objectivity is to be preserved (cf. Benjamin C. Leslie, *Trinitarian Hermeneutics – The Hermeneutical Significance of Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 228).

<sup>627</sup> Colin E. Gunton makes the point that Barth’s understanding of the transcendence of God cannot be understood as an absence of space and time, as that would be a denial of His revelation in the world made manifest in Jesus Christ. However, in the inner-trinitarian being of God the union of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a distant relationship that exists in the one essence of God. ‘There is a distance within the inner-trinitarian relations, a kind of living space in which God is freely Himself’ (cf. Colin E. Gunton, ‘The triune God and the freedom of the creature’, *Karl Barth: Centenary Essays*, p. 48).

<sup>628</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 52.

<sup>629</sup> As Robert Jensen aptly notes here; for Barth, the Triune God in the free choice of His decision to act decided to elect. This is God’s choice before all time. God’s elective choice was to unite Himself in the person of Christ with humankind. And in this choice God not only chooses that He *will be* the man Jesus, in this event He *is* the man Jesus. Therefore, it is the incarnate Son ‘who is Himself His own presupposition in God’s eternity.’ The incarnation takes place in eternity as the foundation of its occurrence in time (cf. Robert W. Jensen, *Systematic Theology*, Volume I, p. 140).



maintains His own existence in relation to the world, and the world in relation to God (*CD* IV/2:52-53).

It is one thing that God is present in and with everything that is and occurs, that in Him we live and move and have our being (*Ac.* 17:28), but it is quite another that He Himself became and is man. Even this union and unity cannot therefore be compared or exchanged with the *unio personalis* in Jesus Christ.<sup>630</sup>

The union of divinity and humanity is therefore not to be understood as an analogy, as in the union of two people that presupposes two self-existent beings; because the union of the Logos with humanity is also defined as *anhypostasis* (*CD* IV/2:52-53). As the One who is both creator and Lord of heaven and earth, the Son of God adds to His existence that of humanity with the expressed purpose to bridge the antitheses between God and humanity as the mediator between God and humanity (*CD* IV/2:54). This is the movement of God in the Word becoming flesh, in the ἐγένετο. This is the event of His movement towards humanity through His union with humanity in Jesus of Nazareth as *anhypostasis and enhypostasis*,<sup>631</sup> where fallen (and false) human essence that could only point to true and real human essence, now becomes true and real human essence as the Son of Man in Jesus Christ.<sup>632</sup>

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<sup>630</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, pp. 52-53.

<sup>631</sup> Graham Ward recognizes Barth's innovation of the 'dual formula', and the important theological consequences of this formulation, and argues that for Barth, Jesus Christ is described primarily as an *unio personalis sive hypostica* and only secondarily as an *unio naturarum* (*CD* I/2:162). Ward identifies here a hierarchy of descriptions – primary and secondary – that allows not only for the positive teaching of the *enhypostasis* but also for the negative teaching of the *anhypostasis*. Ward argues that *anhypostasis* safeguards two theological axioms for Barth: 'first, the utter uniqueness of this unity and, second, the lack of a point of contact between God and human beings in creation.' Therefore, *anhypostasis* accords emphasis to a *unio personalis sive hypostica* rather than a *unio naturarum*. Ward suggests that 'anhypostasis withdraws the Godhead deep into its own mystery; enhypostasis speaks of an indwelling human being in Christ – just as all things exist in and through Christ. The reason why this dual formula and distinction between primary and secondary description is important for Barth is that *enhypostasis* can then not suggest a *communis participatio* – which he views as the Lutheran error in Christology. For such *enhypostatic* unity, 'does not this give us a kind of reciprocal relation between Creator and creature?' (*CD* I/2:164). Ward argues that there is a wide range of distinctions to be made between 'reciprocity' and 'relation' (i.e., relation between Creator and creatures without that being reciprocal (understood as symmetrical)). He concludes that Barth's 'inability to think through an asymmetrical relation that would bind more closely a *unio personalis sive hypostica* with a *unio naturarum* – Barth's modern and uncritical construal of 'nature' – forestalls such an exploration. As such the work of Christ cannot be characterized in terms of the ordinary human operations of the world – in politics, economics, social and cultural milieu, his friends, his family, his enemies, his admirers. Christ becomes the perfect expression of Cartesian subjectivity: autonomous, self-determining, self-defining, the atomized subject of a number of distinct properties or predicates; as Barth himself puts it, the 'epistemological principle'. (*CD* IV/1:21). Despite Ward's argument against Barth's denial of distinctions to be made between 'reciprocity' and 'relation', Barth would certainly not characterize the humanity of Christ as not the ordinary human operations of the world.

<sup>632</sup> Barth states that: 'Redemption through righteousness has not only happened; because it has happened, it has also become manifest and effective. God's work was also God's Word. In acting, God also spoke. But God's Word is a



Barth draws a careful distinction here between the unity of God with humanity in Jesus Christ in correspondence with the *unio mystica*; that is, the presence of grace where God gives Himself to each individual, or assumes the individual into unity with Himself as part of the Christian experience and relationship. Barth understands that such a correspondence actually inverts the relationship between the Christian and Christ. The believer's relationship to Christ is not a repetition of the being of God in Jesus Christ that corresponds to our knowing the being of God in Jesus Christ.<sup>633</sup> Such thinking may suggest that the relationship between the *unio hypostatica* and the *unio mystica* may be reversed, whereas the *unio mystica* is to be understood as the basic phenomenon and the *unio hypostatica* in Jesus as the secondary (CD IV/2:55-56).

Barth argues that 'Paul himself did not say that God lives in me, but Christ.' The Christian therefore does not claim the fullness of the union of God for his own experience, but that 'other', the Mediator, Jesus Christ, in whom it has taken place for him. This understanding differentiates the Giver and gift of grace from the Christian as the recipient and from its outworking in the Christian's life. Barth's argument draws to conclusion a material insight that he describes as having 'decisive importance.'

The fact that the existence of God became and is also in His Son the existence of a man—the *unio hypostatica* as the basic form of the Christ-event—seems to dispense with formal analogies altogether, according to the general drift of our discussion.<sup>634</sup>

In effect Barth shifts the Chalcedonian argument of the *unio hypostatica* from one of strict *being* to one of *being* and *event* made manifest in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.<sup>635</sup> As being and

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creative Word which bears fruit. And its first fruit is that it finds witnesses, a witnessing people... In this people who can understand their existence only in the Word of God, redemption through righteousness becomes provisionally and relatively but most effectively an event and recognizable as such' (cf. Karl Barth, The Heidelberg Catechism for Today, 'The Revelation of God's Righteousness', p. 51).

<sup>633</sup> Barth argues against Donald Baillie (*God was in Christ*) and Baillie's attempt to formulate a new interpretation of the Chalcedonian definition. In Gal. 2:20: "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me." Barth understands Baillie to argue that it is not merely a statement about the being of the apostle or Christian, but it 'offers a *schema* for the knowledge of Jesus Christ Himself.' Barth further argues that this is not a new discovery, but is in fact the secret *via regia* of all Neo-Protestant Christology, except that 'it is not always pressed forward from this point to the Chalcedonian definition.' Taken to its logical conclusion Barth suggests that Baillie's argument moves to interpret Christ in light of the Christian rather than the Christian in the light of Christ (CD IV/2, pp. 55-57).

<sup>634</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 57.

<sup>635</sup> Charles T. Waldrop interprets Barth's Christology as basically Alexandrian based upon the structure of Barth's doctrine of the divinity of Christ, his concept of the unity of the person, and his language about Christ. Waldrop argues that in Barth's thinking 'because Jesus Christ is the act of God, and because God is his act, it follows immediately that Jesus Christ is the essence of God. Further, since God's essence is his deity, it follows that the deity of God is also the deity of Jesus Christ.' From this Waldrop concludes that Barth's descriptions of Jesus Christ

event the incarnation of Jesus Christ by definition supersedes all earthly analogies in His direct revelation of God. There is no earthly relational analogy that corresponds to the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of the human nature that Christ assumes to Himself in the event of His revelation.

It was obviously that in Jesus Christ we have to do with an event and being which, as the direct revelation of God, not only speaks for itself, but speaks also for its own uniqueness, i.e., for the fact that it is analogous only to itself and can be understood only in terms of itself... But we cannot really know Jesus Christ without realising from the very outset the futility of this search for analogies, and the inadequacy of all analogies to His own becoming and being (CD IV/2:58).

Furthermore, as head of His church, His church manifests the form of His earthly body as its heavenly head.<sup>636</sup> And as His church, this people exist as His ‘earthly-historical’ form of existence – as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis (CD IV/2:59). Although there is no earthly analogy of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ’s human nature, Barth in fact draws upon a heavenly / earthly analogy of the church and its union to Christ as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. In this way Barth quite clearly uses the concept of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the relationship of the Church (in human essence) to that of its head (in divine essence). The Church does not exist independently from its head, nor is it of the same essence as its head, but exists in virtue of its union in His existence.<sup>637</sup> It is therefore the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis relationship of the Church to its Head; that is Christ, which in fact determines the reality of the Church.<sup>638</sup>

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as being in the beginning with God, and being identified as God in the strictest sense undermines the Antiochian interpretation of Barth’s Christology (cf. Charles T. Waldrop, *Karl Barth’s Christology: Its Basic Alexandrian Character*, p. 92-107). Moreover, Waldrop argues that Barth’s use of anhypostasis and enhypostasis indicates that the human nature of Christ is not a real person either before or after the moment of the incarnation. Therefore the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis affirm that Christ’s human nature is identical with the existence of Jesus Christ and also the existence of God (cf. Waldrop, p. 115).

<sup>636</sup> Barth took quite seriously the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church. That is, in His humanity Jesus Christ became indissolubly united to His Church as its head and source of being. For Barth, one could not speak of the Christian Church and not understand and describe it as ‘the living congregation of the living Lord Jesus Christ’ (cf. Karl Barth, ‘The Church: The Living Congregation of the Living Lord Jesus Christ’, in *God Here and Now*, p.61).

<sup>637</sup> Michael Welker argues that Barth understands the Church is joined together to Christ through His work of reconciliation by the power of the Holy Spirit. That is, God Himself awakens and gathers the church to Himself by the power of the Holy Spirit through the reality of the Church, which is realized in its union with Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. Michael Welker, ‘Karl Barths und Dietrich Bonhoeffer Beiträge zur zukünftigen Ekklesiologie’, *Zeitschrift für Dialektische Theologie*, 22 no 2 2006, p 120 – 137).

<sup>638</sup> Alister McGrath makes the point that the life, work, and doctrine of the Church are totally dependent upon the presupposition that through the Christ that she proclaims that true and authentic reconciliation with God is a present reality for those within the Church. ‘The Christian faith and the Christian church alike stand or fall with the

It is of human essence—for the Church is not of divine essence like its Head. But it does not exist in independence of Him. It is not itself the Head, nor does it become such. But it exists (ανυποστατος and ενυποστατος) in and in virtue of His existence (CD IV/2:59).

It is the antithesis of heavenly and the earthly<sup>639</sup> that is united together in Jesus Christ, which emerges as the fundamental principle that Barth deals with in the context of Chalcedon. The material point is that divine essence alone is the subject in the event of this union. ‘It is apparent at once that divine and human cannot be united as the essence of the one and the same subject’ (CD IV/2:61).

However we may define divine and human essence, unless we do violence either to the one or the other we can only define them (with all the regard we may have for the original divine reference of human essence) in a sharp distinction and even antithesis. The statement that Jesus Christ is the One who is of divine and human essence dares to unite that which by definition cannot be united.<sup>640</sup>

In the union of divine and human essence in Jesus Christ is actualized the assumption of human essence by the Son of God while maintaining his own divine essence. This means that Jesus Christ exists as the Son of God while also participating as such in human essence, and He exists as the Son of Man while participating as such in the divine essence of the Son of God. Therefore, on both sides there is a genuine and true participation. As such, Barth can say that the divine essence of the Son of God ‘gives to the human essence of Jesus of Nazareth a part in His own divine essence as the eternal Son’ who remains co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the God-head (CD IV/2:62).

This is the grace of God made manifest in Jesus of Nazareth in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of human essence, which is exalted through its union with divine essence in the event of Jesus Christ. In the act of God – the Son of God brings into union divinity and humanity

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authenticity of the proclamation that God has established a new relationship between Himself and sinful man, and the life of faith stands or falls with the knowledge of the present actuality of this relationship’ (cf. Alister McGrath, ‘Justification and Christology: The Axiomatic Correlation between the Historical Jesus and the Proclaimed Christ’, *Modern Theology* 1.1 1984, p. 46). This articulates quite well Barth’s understanding of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis relationship between the reality of Jesus Christ and His Church.

<sup>639</sup> As Michael Welker notes, Barth’s theological grounding is based upon the *movement* of God’s revelation and the foundation of faith’s orientation. Because God is in heaven that means we are to expect God’s action, God’s engagement in the reality of our lives ‘from above, straight down from above’ (cf. Michael Welker, *Creation and Reality*, p. 34). Welker cites Barth’s Tambach lecture ‘Der Christ in der Gesellschaft’.

<sup>640</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 61.

in His being as very God and very man. Barth emphasizes that in Jesus Christ is not found a unity, but a union of two-sided participation in the *communio naturarum* (CD IV/2:63).

In the one Subject Jesus Christ divine and human essence is united, but it is not one and the same. This would presuppose one of three things: that God had ceased to be God and changed Himself into a man; that man had ceased to be man and become God (if anything, an even more dreadful thought); or (worst of all) that there had been formed of divine and human essence a third and middle thing, neither God nor man.<sup>641</sup>

Barth argues that according to the witness of Scripture, the actuality of Jesus Christ is both God and humanity together in a true and genuine union. This is a union without destruction of either the one or the other as the reconciler and mediator between God and humanity, as the One who restores and fulfills the covenant instituted by God between God and His creation of humanity (CD IV/2:63). As the mediator of the covenant, however, the human essence of Christ is not to be understood as the subject here. The human essence is not an individual possibility, which has existence and became, and has actuality in and by itself. How, then, can it be the subject (CD IV/2:65)?

Nor can divine nature, divine essence, Godhead as such be considered as the subject of atonement and incarnation because He exists in and with the existence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and only as the common predicate of the triune subject in its modes of existence. And it is only in the modes of His being that He can be known and expressed in relation to Himself. This One God, who exists in the modes of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is the divine subject who carries and determines divine essence, and not conversely. Barth argues that in John 1:14 we are not told the Godhead, the divine nature, became flesh, but it is the divine Logos that becomes flesh. He is the subject in and with His divine essence, who exists and is actual God the Son (CD IV/2:65-66).

That is why it says that He, the Son, the Word became flesh. It is only as this happens in the act of this Subject, that there takes place this union of divine and human essence. And all that we have seen concerning this union—the two-sided participation of the divine and human essence, the genuineness of both even in the conjunction, but also the reality of

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<sup>641</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 63.

the union as such—in short the whole doctrine of the two natures in the strict sense depends on this primary and proper union and unity as it is described in Jn. 1:14.<sup>642</sup>

It is in this sense that Barth rejects the notion that the person of Jesus Christ is constituted in two natures defined as divine and human. ‘The doctrine of the two natures cannot try to stand on its own feet or to be true to itself.’

Its whole secret is the secret of Jn. 1:14—the central saying by which it is described. Whatever we may have to say about the union of the two natures can only be a commentary on this central saying. Neither of the two natures counts as such, because neither exists and is actual as such. Only the Son of God counts, He who adds human essence to His divine essence thus giving it existence and uniting both in Himself. In Him, and Him alone, they were and are united.<sup>643</sup>

For Barth, the emphasis of the incarnation must fall conceptually on the divine subject as the Son of God, which gives precedence to the doctrine of the *hypostatica unio* over the *communio naturarum*. The question that we raise here is Barth using a minimalist view of the *hypostatical unio* with a contradictory view towards Chalcedon when expressing Jesus Christ as the union very God and very man, rather one person with two natures?<sup>644</sup> We argue that Barth is not expressing the union of the divine Logos with humanity in a way that contradicts the Chalcedonian definition, and certainly not with a minimalist view towards Chalcedon. What we see here in Barth is his emphatic defense of the incarnation that must be understood in light of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ – *as event*. This in a nutshell defines the essence of how Barth understands the revelation of Jesus Christ who in His being not only reveals the Godhead, but acts on behalf of the Godhead.<sup>645</sup> As the Son of God He is the divine subject who moves towards humanity by taking true humanity unto Himself, humanity that is, and must be, anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis. Although He remains unchanged in His divine essence in union

<sup>642</sup> CD IV/2, p. 65-66.

<sup>643</sup> Barth understands the Godhead as such to be meaningless unless understood in terms of its modus of existence as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. With respect to the human nature of Christ, it too becomes meaningless absent its union with the divine essence in the Logos. The significance of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis is quite evident here. As expressed in John 1:14, it is the Son of God who is the subject in uniting to humanity to Himself, a humanity that only enjoys reality as the object of this union in the Logos.

<sup>644</sup> This is the conclusion drawn by Paul Dafydd Jones.

<sup>645</sup> Paul Dafydd Jones argues that while Barth accepts the importance of Chalcedon with respect to its defense of Christ’s divinity, he shows little interest in one of its key conceptual elements, the concept of nature (*physis*) used to explain Christ as being fully divine and fully human. Instead, he adopts what Jones describes as a ‘decidedly minimalist alternative’; that is, Christ as *vere Deus vere homo*. Jones recognizes in this ‘alternative’ an indication of Barth’s interest in developing a Christological course ‘beyond Chalcedon’ that is based upon the biblical narratives and a highly actualized ontology (cf. Paul Dafydd Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, p. 7).

with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Logos has brought the essence of humanity into union with Himself. The divine Son of God is always the subject of this union, and the human essence that He assumed to Himself is always the object of this union, and it is the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's humanity that serve to regulate and keep separate the divine essence from human essence, while at the same time maintaining their indissoluble union. This is how Barth understands the *hypostatica unio*.

### Chalcedon: In Dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology

In this context Barth further considers the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures of Jesus Christ as *hypostatica unio* – grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis – in dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology.<sup>646</sup> With respect to Lutheran orthodox Christology, Barth argues that their main interest was not so much the central question of the mystery of the hypostatic union, but the resultant (and secondary) mystery of the *communio naturarum* and its consequences; that is, the relationship between Christ's divine and human essence in their mutual participation. As such, the Lutherans were primarily concerned with the mutual participation enclosed in the union of two natures with particular interest in the communication of properties between the divine and human natures. Barth explains that the Lutherans' concern was that 'the divine triumph over the distinction and antithesis between God and humanity took place directly, and is a fact, in the humanity of Jesus Christ.' They emphasized that we cannot experience and know the Godhead as such directly, who can only be experienced and known in the humanity of Jesus Christ (*CD IV/2:66*). For the Lutherans, the *unio hypostatica* was only a preparatory point that leads to the attainment of the true end – the *communio naturarum*. Furthermore, the person observable in the humanity brought into union with divinity is also the principle in the event of the hypostatic union (*CD IV/2:67*).

And obviously there was a desire to maintain the *ασυγχυτως* and *ατρεπτως* of Chalcedon, and therefore the genuineness and integrity of the two natures, just as in the Lutheran Eucharistic doctrine the bread did not cease to be bread as it was identical with the body of Christ. Yet this emphasis in Lutheran theology does not fall on this differentiating proviso, on the *ασυγχυτως* and *ατρεπτως*, but on the *αδιαιρετως* and

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<sup>646</sup> We note here that similar to his dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed orthodox Christology with respect to the *Calvinistic Extra* (that is, the essence of divine nature in union with human nature), Barth engages Lutheran and Reformed Christology once again in view of Chalcedon and the essence of human nature in union with the divine nature in Jesus Christ.

αχωριστως of Chalcedon, on the *arctissima et intima περιχωρησις* and *ενδυασις* of the two natures (Quenstedt), on the equations which result it, as that the Son of God, and therefore God in His divine essence, is this man, the Son of Mary, and above all, conversely, that this man the Son of Mary, is the Son of God, and therefore God in His essence.<sup>647</sup>

Barth further argues that in practice the Lutherans may also make statements about the humanity of Christ that describe the divine only, and not the human essence, which demonstrates their concern for the *communio naturarum*. Moreover, while the Lutherans rejected the Monophysite heresy of Eutyches rejected at Chalcedon, in Barth's view they strongly rejected Nestorius while they 'appropriated the concern of the Alexandrian theology as purified at Chalcedon' (*CD* IV/2:67).

In contrast, Barth argues that given the context of Chalcedon the Reformed did not have the same interest in the presence of the divinity in the humanity of Christ as the Lutherans. Although the Reformed did not deny the *communio naturarum*, their emphasis was laid upon the fact that the Word became flesh according to John 1:14. In contradistinction to the Lutherans, however, the Reformed emphasized that the Word became flesh based upon the *unio hypostatica* as the meaning and basis of the *communio naturarum*. The Son of God is understood as the Subject of the incarnation, as the One who creates and maintains the *communio naturarum* by virtue of His 'act of equating divine and human essence, and not so much upon the consequent equation.' For the Reformed, statements about the humanity of Christ must correspond to His existing in divine essence rather than human essence assumed by Him into unity with His eternal existence (*CD* IV/2:67-68).

And it is obvious that, while they did not question, but solemnly affirmed the Chalcedonian *αδιαίρετως* [indivisible] and *αχωριστως* [inseparably], they necessarily took a greater interest in the *ασυγχυτως* [without confusion] and *ατρέπτως* [unchangeable], in the opposition to Eutyches and therefore the distinction between the two natures, in their distinctiveness even in union, and especially in the continuing distinctiveness of the divine essence of the Logos, but consequently in that of the human essence united with it as well.<sup>648</sup>

For the Reformed the emphasis of the incarnation is based upon the sovereignty of the Son of God as the Subject, who acts in the free grace God in taking to Himself the flesh of humanity,

<sup>647</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 67.

<sup>648</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 68.



which is not merged or dissolved in the humanity that He assumed. Moreover, as this One who exists in divine and human essence is not to be understood as a neutral thing; that is, as a ‘human essence illuminated and impregnated by divinity’. Given the Chalcedonian distinction of the two natures, the Reformed looked with a caustic eye to the Lutherans and what they perceived to be the threat of the divinisation of the humanity of Christ. Given the backdrop of Chalcedon, the Reformed sought to defend the concern of the School of Antioch without dividing up Jesus Christ into a Son of God and Son of Man (*CD IV/2:68-69*).

They had no desire to seek or see or grasp the overcoming of the opposition between God and man, and therefore the reconciliation of the world with God, elsewhere but in the humanity assumed by God, and therefore in the man Jesus of Nazareth. But to see and grasp it in Him, they tried to direct their true attention to the One who overcame in the overcoming, and to the act of His overcoming—to Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the eternal Son of God, and to the act of God which took place and is a fact in Him.<sup>649</sup>

It is in this sense that Barth claims for himself a similar orientation as the Reformed towards the Chalcedonian definition of the union of two natures in Jesus Christ. Barth, however, leaves for himself a caveat in the Lutheran sense with respect to their interest in the *communio naturarum* (*CD IV/2:69*).

...we do not fail to appreciate the attraction of the particular Lutheran interest in the *communio naturarum*, nor do we wish to ignore the concern which underlies it. It is only that the preference ought to be given to the Reformed concern, and the Lutheran taken up afterwards in so far as it shows itself to be justified.<sup>650</sup>

Barth draws to conclusion his historical analysis of Lutheran and Reformed Christology juxtaposed to the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ with the summary statement that:

as the Son of God became and is man, as He caused His existence to become that of a man, as He united divine and human essence in Himself, He exalted human essence into Himself, and as very God became very man.<sup>651</sup>

This is Barth’s understanding of the ‘Christ-event’ in the history in which God Himself ‘became and was and is and will be very man in His Son Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Man.’ But the

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<sup>649</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>650</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 69.

<sup>651</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 69.

emphasis of this Christ-event, of this homecoming of the Son of Man in this history, is the exaltation of human essence by the fact that ‘God Himself lent it His own existence in His Son thus uniting it with His own divine essence.’<sup>652</sup> Moreover, this is an essence common to all humanity, which in no way is altered by its union with the Son of God. Jesus of Nazareth is humanity as we are; He is our Brother (*CD IV/2:69*).

But He was and is our first-born Brother. As a man like all men, He was and is the Head of all men. As He became a servant for us, He became our Lord. For in Him, in this man, we have to do with the exaltation of the essence common to all men. In virtue of the fact that He is the Son of God, and therefore of divine and human essence, He is the Son of Man, the true man. Completely like us as a man, He is completely unlike us as the true man. In the essence common to us all, as a man like ourselves, He is completely different. This is His exaltation.<sup>653</sup>

### The Mutual Participation of Divinity and Humanity

But how does Barth understand conceptually this union of divine and human essence that is accomplished by the Son of God in His incarnation? How does this mutual participation of divine and human essence take place in and with this union? First, Barth argues that this is not a rigid union like ‘like two planks lashed or glued together...as if each retained its separate identity in this union and the two remained alien in a neutral proximity.’ But rather, the Son of God, acting as the divine Subject, unites in this action each of the two natures without the alteration of their being in this union (*CD IV/2:70*).<sup>654</sup>

<sup>652</sup> John Macken notes a correspondence in Jesus Christ of the humility of the Son of God to the exaltation of the Son of Man. In this way correspondence not only allows the mutual determination and convergence of Christology and anthropology, but also demonstrates an antithetical parallelism where polar opposites may reflect one another and therefore establish and maintain radical distinctions. This is how Barth sharply distinguishes the humanity of Christ from His divinity (cf. John Macken, *The Autonomy Theme in the Church Dogmatics: Karl Barth and His Critics*, pp. 60 – 61. We argue that without question we see a in Jesus Christ a correspondence, a convergence of humiliation and exaltation that is ontologically accomplished as the human essence of Jesus is taken into union with the eternal Logos as anhypostasis and enhypostasis. This is always the frame of ontological reference for Barth in this union of divine and human natures.

<sup>653</sup> *CD IV/2*, p. 69. We also note here Barth’s clear allusion Romans 5, and his understanding of Jesus Christ as the first Adam, as true humanity taken up into Jesus Christ.

<sup>654</sup> Paul Dafydd Jones marks what I believe is consistently demonstrated in Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, that Barth’s interpretation of the New Testament plays a pivotal role in his mature Christology. (I would add here that Barth’s exegesis of *Romans* holds the place of initiation in his theological reliance upon the Scripture). Jones argues that to fully appreciate Barth’s actualistic understanding of the union of divinity and humanity in Christ; that is, the reality that the ‘Word becoming flesh’ is matched by the determination of Jesus of Nazareth as the flesh that the Son becomes, one must ‘reckon with Barth’s exegetical claims.’ It is the Scriptures that affects and shapes Barth’s description of Christ’s person and work (cf. Paul Dafydd Jones, ‘The Heart of the Matter: Karl Barth’s Christological Exegesis’ in *The Word is Truth – Barth on Scripture*, p. 173).

By and in Him the divine acquires a determination of the human, and the human a determination from the divine. The Son of God takes and has a part in the human essence assumed by Him by giving this a part in His divine essence. And the human essence assumed by Him takes and has a part in His divine by receiving this from Him.<sup>655</sup>

Stated more precisely, Barth argues that this mutual participation of divinity and humanity must be understood as the Son of God who acts in this event<sup>656</sup>. In other words, while His divine essence (shared with the Father and Holy Spirit) and His human essence (*per assumptionem*) are of course real, they can only act as He exists in them (*CD IV/2:70*).<sup>657</sup>

He Himself grasps and has and maintains the leadership in what His divine essence is and means for His human, and His human for His divine, in their mutual participation. He is the norm and limit and criterion in this happening. He is, of course, the One who is of divine essence and assumes human, the Son of God and also the Son of Man. But it is He Himself and not an it, either divine or human. If we keep this clearly before us, it is apparent that the mutual participation of the divine and human essence as it takes place in and by Him does so in a twofold differentiation.<sup>658</sup>

Barth, however, is careful to distinguish this mutual participation of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ between the 1) participation of Christ's divine essence in His human essence from 2) the participation of His human essence in the divine. That is, His divine essence is that which is originally proper to Him, whereas His human essence is adopted by Him, and assumed by His divine essence (*CD IV/2:70-71*). Their mutual determination therefore remains distinct because:

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<sup>655</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 70.

<sup>656</sup> Bruce McCormack quite clearly points out here that for Barth, what God is and what He can do is learned through the 'following-after' of His movement into history. That is, what it means to be human must be learned from the history of the man in who human nature is restored into what God intended it to be. In the incarnation of Jesus Christ is made manifest in time the eternal being-in-act. Therefore, the second person of the trinity did not 'become' the 'Logos as human' at the point of the incarnation. The second person of the trinity (eternally speaking) already has a name, which is Jesus Christ. McCormack argues that in this understanding Barth does not depart from the Chalcedon formula, but has reinterpreted the significance of its central categories in terms of a 'historicized' ontology; that is, an understanding of God's being as a being-in-act (cf. Bruce McCormack, 'The Ontological Presupposition of Barth's Doctrine of the Atonement', in *The Gory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical & Practical Perspectives: Essays in honor of Roger R. Nicole*, p. 360).

<sup>657</sup> Eberhard Jüngel refers to Barth's understanding of Jesus as the Royal man, as the one human being through which God's intention for humankind can be conceived. Furthermore, His royalty does not exclude, but includes all humankind who are reflected in Him. Moreover, Jüngel argues that humanity is the implicit subject of Barth's Christology because it is a reflection of every human being. 'Christology is the carefully considered foundation of anthropology in Barth's characteristically christological thought' (cf. Eberhard Jüngel, *Karl Barth – A Theological Legacy*, p. 128.)

<sup>658</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 70.

The determination of His divine essence is *to* His human, and the determination of His human essence *from* His divine. He gives the human essence a part of His divine, and the human essence receives this part in the divine from Him.<sup>659</sup>

For Barth ‘mutual’ cannot be understood to mean ‘interchangeable’. In other words, the relationship between the two natures is not reversible, nor cyclic, because each has its own role. In this context Barth emphasizes that this union is a real history that takes place from ‘above to below and also from below to above.’ However, it takes place from above to below first, and only then from below to above. We note here in this event is realized the coalescence of the self-humiliated Son of God who is also the exalted humanity. And yet, even in this coalescence of humility and exaltation we see Christ as the subject of this history. For Barth, this is true not simply because the divine and human essence in Christ are different by definition, but because they have a different character in their mutual relationship. Moreover, in this context Barth makes a second distinction. As the Son of God becomes humanity He assumes human essence to His own divine essence in becoming Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Man (*CD IV/2:70-71*).<sup>660</sup>

Jesus, the Son of David and Mary, was and is of divine essence as the Son of God, very God, God by nature. The Son of God exists as Jesus exists, and Jesus exists as the Son of God exists. As very man Jesus Himself is the Son of God and therefore of divine essence, God by nature.<sup>661</sup>

Barth marks here this differentiation in relation to the mutual participation of divine and human essence; that is, the human essence that is assumed by the Son of God, the human essence that Christ unites with His divine essence ‘became and is divine essence’ (*CD IV/2:71*). This human essence, however, is not divinized in this union.

Jesus Christ became and is the Son of Man only because and as the Son of God took human essence and gave it existence and actuality in and by Himself. There was and is, therefore, no Son of Man who, conversely, has assumed divine essence in His human essence and thus become the Son of God.<sup>662</sup>

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<sup>659</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 71.

<sup>660</sup> Paul Molnar makes the point that in the incarnation Barth preferred to speak of an assumption of the flesh by the Word of God because it implied that what took place in the incarnation was a direct act of God in history. That is, the Word remained the Word and did not cease to be God while truly becoming flesh (cf. Paul D. Molnar, *Incarnation & Resurrection – Toward a Contemporary Understanding*, p. 2).

<sup>661</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 71.

<sup>662</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 71.

Barth further clarifies that the two elements in the history, ‘the humiliation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and His exaltation as the Son of Man, are not in simple correspondence.’ First, the humiliation of the Son of God means that He became humanity. The second, however, His exaltation as the Son of Man does not mean that He became God. Barth asks: how could Christ become what He already was from all eternity as the Son of God, and that which He did not cease to be as the Son of Man? That He is one and the same as Son of God and Son of Man does not mean that He did not become true humanity or that He became humanity and then ceased to be humanity, exchanging His humanity for, or changing it into divine essence. Otherwise, He did not really accomplish His humiliation as the Son of God, which would bring into question how He could be the reconciler and mediator. Therefore, the exaltation of the Son of Man who was also the Son of God is not to be understood in the divinization of His human essence corresponding to His becoming humanity (*CD IV/2:72*).

The human essence of the Son of God will always be human essence, although united with His divine essence, and therefore exalted in and by Him, set at the side of the Father, brought into perfect fellowship with Him, filled and directed by the Holy Spirit, and in full harmony with the divine essence common to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It will be the humanity of *God*.<sup>663</sup>

This is how Barth understands the twofold differentiation of divine and human essence and their mutual participation in Jesus Christ. The divine essence of the Son of God is wholly that which gives, and the human essence of the Son of man is that which is exalted to existence and actuality only in and by Him (*CD IV/2:72*). This is the quintessential essence of Barth’s understanding of the *anhypostasis and enhypostasis* in the human nature of Christ. We cannot look at the two natures of Christ as though they simply existed side by side; that is, a Son of God who is not Son of Man, and a Son of Man who is not Son God. We cannot speak of Jesus Christ in words that refer exclusively to His divine or exclusively to His Human essence. In the one Jesus Christ belongs everything that is divine essence and everything that is human essence (*CD IV/2:74*).

Within the enclosure of the hypostatic union it is the divine nature that illumines and penetrates the human essence so that all the attributes of the divine nature of Jesus Christ may be ascribed

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<sup>663</sup> *CD IV/2*, p. 72.

to the His human nature. Barth makes it clear, however, that this does not involve a destruction or alteration of the human nature, but it does mean that:

...this nature experiences the additional development (beyond its humanity) of acquiring and having as such all the marks of divinity, of participating directly in the majesty of God, of enjoying in its creatureliness every perfection of the uncreated essence of God.<sup>664</sup>

True salvation is therefore realized in Jesus Christ in so far as this takes place and is actual in Him; that is, in His human nature the Godhead could directly reveal itself as a new and divine ‘element of life’ that has entered the world of humanity. It is this entrance of divine essence into the world of humanity that directly accomplishes its reconciliation with God in this new and eternal life (*CD IV/2:77*).<sup>665</sup>

### The Exaltation of the Son of Man

In the *communicatio gratiae*, in the mutual participation of divine and human nature that results from the union of the two in Jesus Christ, Barth understands that the basic concept of the one Son of God and Son of Man (the hypostatic union) is not an empty one, but points to the fullness of this union of two natures *in the event of a movement to human essence*. Yet this movement has a twofold character. On the one hand there is God Himself as the acting subject in His mode of existence as the Son of God, who is of the one divine essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit. On the other hand there is human essence, which receives the Son of God’s existence and actuality. The results of the this act of God is that the Son of God also now exists in His being as the Son of Man.<sup>666</sup> As such, what takes place is primarily a determination of divine essence, not its alteration. This is in fact the election of Jesus Christ (*CD IV/2:84*).

God does not first elect and determine man but Himself. In His eternal counsel, and then in its execution in time, He determines to address Himself to man, and to do so in such a

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<sup>664</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 77.

<sup>665</sup> This is the consistent theology of Karl Barth that finds its source in the Scripture, and is confessed by Reformed Creeds that ‘God reveals Himself to man in Jesus Christ’ in whom the people of God have a head. He is the Lord Jesus Christ, God and man (God and sinful man) united as one (cf. Karl Barth, *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God According to the Teaching of the Reformation*, pp. 57-59).

<sup>666</sup> It is the Son of Man who lived in the history of this world that substantiates the revelation of God in time, in His act of reconciliation. As John Webster takes note, Barth’s most extended treatment of the Christological construal of history is Barth’s presentation of Christ’s person and work in the Doctrine of Reconciliation. For Barth, this history is ‘the most actual thing, the sum and substance of God’s time with us and for time for God’ (*CD IV/1*, 83). (cf John Webster, ‘Barth’s Christology’ in *Karl Barth: A Future for Postmodern Theology?*, p. 33).

way that He Himself becomes man. God elects and determines Himself to be the God of man.<sup>667</sup>

Barth understands that the Christ of the Scripture remains immutable in His divine essence, even as He humiliates Himself as the Son of Man in His election and determination to exist in divine and human essence in the one Son of God and Son of Man. This is how He addresses and directs His divine essence to His human essence (*CD IV/2:85*). In effect, human essence also becomes the essence of God as He assumes and adopts it in Jesus Christ. In this way the divine essence of Jesus Christ condescends towards human essence with an ‘open-handed generosity’ (*CD IV/2:87*).

Even in Jesus Christ it is not itself human essence. But in Jesus Christ it is not without it, but absolutely with it.<sup>668</sup>

Moreover, Christ exercises grace by ‘becoming the Son of Man as the Son of God, and therefore in the strictest, total union of His nature with ours.’ This is accomplished in the power of His divine nature, which is addressed to human nature in acquiring *this* form. This explains why the participation of the two unions in Jesus Christ is only one-sided – *that of the human in the divine*. Indeed, the first instance is that of the divine in the human where it has its ‘ultimate depth and unshakable solidity’ as a participation of the human in the divine. This is God who bound Himself to humanity. This must come first because it is the presupposition of the other (*CD IV/2:87*).

Based therefore upon the presupposition that God has bound Himself to humanity in acquiring the form of humanity, Barth asks what it means for Christ in the human sphere that ‘all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily’ (*CD IV/2:87*). In general terms, Barth answers that it is human essence as determined by the electing grace of God. But, it is also human essence that is confronted by the divine essence in that God willed to be and became humanity as well as God. That is, without becoming divine the humanity of Christ is an essence that exists in and with God, being adopted, sanctified, and ruled by Him. In other words, this is the ‘exaltation which comes to human essence in the one Jesus Christ’ (*CD IV/2:88*).

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<sup>667</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 84.

<sup>668</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 87.



As Barth understands it, this exaltation of human essence is expressed in the language of *communicatio idiomatum*, which is more deeply expressed in the *communio naturarum*, but more deeply still expressed in the *unio hypostatica* on this side the *communicatio gratiarum*. We see clearly here in Barth's thinking the precedence that the *unio hypostatica* takes in view of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. This is the movement of God's grace towards humanity in His willing condescension in the union of divine essence with human essence in the person of Jesus Christ. This is the total and exclusive determination of the human nature of Jesus Christ by the grace of God. Therefore, it is the exaltation of Jesus Christ as the Son of Man which follows the humiliation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which is fulfilled in and with it (*CD IV/2:88*).

The human essence of Christ as the exalted Son of Man is the same humanity as ours. As the exalted Son of Man, as our Head, He remains our Brother as the first-born among many brothers. This does not mean, however, that the human essence He becomes as the recipient of God's electing grace is in any way altered. On the contrary, as the recipient of the electing grace of God, the human essence of Christ is affirmed in its exaltation as the true essence of humanity (*CD IV/2:89*).

It is genuinely human in the deepest sense to live by the electing grace of God addressed to men. This is how Jesus Christ lives as the Son of Man. In this He is the Mediator between God and us men in the power of His identity with the Son of God and therefore in the power of His divinity. How can it be otherwise? How can this fail to be the supreme thing that may be said of His human essence, and therefore that which also distinguishes Him from all other men?<sup>669</sup>

Barth understands that grace is divine giving and human receiving. It is therefore the grace of God that was actually received by Jesus Christ the Son of Man, who as the Son of God becomes the determination of His human essence. Furthermore, not only does this One exist as humanity (as does all humanity for their own existence), but this is particularly true for the Son of Man because although He exists as a creature (and therefore because God exists), but also because He exists as God exists (*CD IV/2:90*).<sup>670</sup>

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<sup>669</sup> *CD IV/2*, p. 89.

<sup>670</sup> John Webster offers a simple but enlightening insight that above all, Barth distances himself from apologetic investigation of the *possibility* of Christian dogmatics by referring to some general realm of human piety or some

His existence as man is identical with the existence of God in His Son. God in His Son becomes man, existing not only as God, but also as man, as this One, as the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth. This existence of God as the man Jesus Christ is the particular grace of His origin addressed to human essence in Him.<sup>671</sup>

As the Son of Man His origin and determination is determined by the grace of God alone. The Son of Man is not an abstraction, He is not of Himself, but derives entirely from His divine origin (CD IV/2:91). In all of this Barth makes it clear that the Son of Man finds His ontological bearings as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in union with the divine nature of Christ.

In all this we are again describing the enhypostasis or anhypostasis of the human nature of Jesus Christ. We may well say that this is the sum and root of all grace addressed to Him. Whatever else has still to be said may be traced back to the fact, and depends upon it, that the One who is Jesus Christ is present in human nature is the Son of God, that the Son is present as this man is present, and that this man is none other than the Son. We can and should state this as follows. It is only as the Son of God that Jesus Christ also exists as man, but He does actually exist in this way. As a man, of this human essence, He can be known even by those who do not know Him as the Son of God.<sup>672</sup>

It is the duality of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis that regulates the humanity of Christ by first affirming His humanity as the same humanity as us (yet without committing sin), and second by guarding against the divinisation of His human essence. 'The Son of Man is not deified by the fact that He is also and primarily the Son of God.' Moreover, Jesus Christ does not become a

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theory of knowledge or ontology. He rejects anything in the way of an extra-theological argument in favor of theology. Barth's response to apologetics is not simply a denial of generally available knowledge of God upon which revelation of Christ builds. Barth is concerned to refute the principle that knowledge can be found in an ontology or anthropology as the basic science of human possibilities. Underlying all this is Barth's theological realism of the ontological supremacy of God in His self-revelation (cf. John Webster, *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation*, pp. 23-26). Graham Ward suggests that with respect to apologetics, Barth understands that the Christian community must embrace the 'reality and truth of the grace of God addressed to the world in Jesus Christ' (CD 4/3.704). That is, the Christian community is enjoined to speak to the world the reality of Jesus Christ while on one hand recognizing that He is not a concept that man can think out for himself – the problem of antithesis (CD 4/3.706), but on the other hand understanding that we speak and think like poor heathen no matter how earnestly we may imagine that we think or speak of it (the grace of God addressed to the world in Jesus Christ) (CD 4/3.707). Therefore, with the knowledge of the diastasis for which there is no 'real synthesis' the fallible Christian community as the witness to a better hope testifies to the word and truth of God – 'a new thing in relation to that contradiction' (CD 4/3.708) (cf. Graham Ward, 'Barth, Hegel, and the Possibility for Christian Apologetics', *Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition*, p. 57).

<sup>671</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 90.

<sup>672</sup> Cf. CD IV/2, p. 91.

fourth mode of being in the Trinity. Rather, He acquires and takes as humanity its full being and work in creation as He has in His being as God (*CD IV/2:94*).<sup>673</sup>

Godhead surrounds this man like a garment, and fills Him as the train of Yahweh filled the temple in Is. 6. This is the determination of His human essence.<sup>674</sup>

This is the grace of God made manifest in the action of God. This is a history given the backdrop of the inward life and eternal counsel of God.

This is a history which in the living Jesus Christ is played out between His human being as the Son of Man and His divine being as he Son of God which He is also and primarily; a history between the Father, and also between the Holy Ghost and Son, who as such is also the Son of Man. How else, then, can this determination of His human essence take place and be seen and understood except as an event?<sup>675</sup>

Barth further explains that a proper understanding of the ‘active character’ of the existence of Jesus Christ in His unity as ‘Son of God and Son of Man’ recognizes that there is no alteration of His humanity in this union. As the Son of God Christ fully participates in the unconditional affirmation of the Father and the Holy Ghost (John 3:34), which distinguishes Him both qualitatively and quantitatively from all other human beings (*CD IV/2:94-95*). The Son of the God becomes a guest in this world where He dwells the flesh of humanity as the eternal Word, and reveals His glory in the exaltation of human essence (*CD IV/2:96*).<sup>676</sup>

But it is not self-evident that He is adopted for it. This is not something which is in and of itself. He is a creaturely, human and even sinful essence. It is flesh with all the weakness of flesh. It is the electing grace of God—and this is its exaltation from this standpoint—which makes it adapted for this purpose.<sup>677</sup>

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<sup>673</sup> Paul Metzger argues that not only did Barth’s employment of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis model set aside the time-eternity dialectic, but it would provide him with categories necessary to solve the dilemma of the strict opposition of the two in their dialectic relationship. This establishes the basis for Barth to truly develop a truly incarnational model of Christology, one that would enable him to ‘set forth a positive yet dialectical conception of the engagement of God and humanity, and Christ and culture (cf. Paul Louis Metzger, *The Word of Christ and the World of Culture – Sacred and Secular through the Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 39).

<sup>674</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 94.

<sup>675</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 94.

<sup>676</sup> David Lauber touches on this theme that in the humanity of Christ, Jesus participates in ‘the human situation in a form of solidarity.’ This includes the fallen state of humanity as sinners and as enemies of God. Although Christ committed no sin, He participates in the sin of humanity by taking the place of humanity. Furthermore, it is the uniqueness of Jesus Christ’s life and passion that accomplishes the redemptive action wherein we are embraced in Christ’s existence (cf. David Lauber, *Barth on the Descent into Hell*, p. 29).

<sup>677</sup> Cf. *CD IV/2*, p. 96.

As the human essence of the Son of God Barth argues that Jesus of Nazareth is empowered by the New Testament concept of the *exousia*, which is imparted to Him and exercised by Him. That is, because He is the Son of God, the Son of Man has freedom and is empowered to act by the electing grace of God (*CD IV/2:96*). Yet, as Barth insists, there is no reason to question the pure humanity of Jesus Christ in relation to this empowering that comes to His human essence by the electing grace of God. Barth understands the human essence of Christ as that of ‘an organ of the Son of Man who is also and primarily the Son of God’ (*CD IV/2:98*).

It is to Him and not this organ, to His human essence as such, that there is given “all power in heaven and in earth” (Mt. 28:18). It does not possess, but it mediates and attests the divine power and authority. It bears and serves it. It is adapted in its function for what the incarnate Word, the Son of God and Son of Man, wills to do, and does actually do, for and to the world as He exists in it, in the human sphere. It is not, therefore, itself a divinely powerful and authoritative essence in which Jesus Christ, very God and very man, the divine Subject existing and acting in the world, makes use of His divine power and authority.<sup>678</sup>

What is revealed in Jesus of Nazareth is absolute divine power and authority. Omnipotence and divinity, however, do not accrue to the human essence of this man in whose existence we must reckon with the identity of His action as a true humanity with the action of the true God. The event of this action is the grace of God that comes to human essence. And in this event, in its ‘pure creatureliness’ the human essence acquires divine *exousia*; that is, divine power and authority. In the occurrence of this event, in the weakness and particularity of Jesus Christ in His human essence belongs the divine universality. This is the life of Jesus Christ who lives in both divine and human essence. In this event the human essence of Jesus Christ acquires divine power and authority to conquer death (*CD IV/2:99*).

Barth expresses what Jesus Christ does as the Son of God in virtue of His divine essence, and what He does as the Son of Man in His human essence as ‘common actualization’, which He does in conjunction and the strictest relationship of the one with the other (*CD IV/2:115*).

The divine expresses and reveals itself wholly in the sphere of the human, and the human serves and attests the divine. It is not merely that the goal is the same. The movement to it is also the same. It is determined by two different factors. But it is along the same road. At no point does the difference mean separation. Nor are abstractions possible to the one who knows Jesus Christ. There is no place for a dualistic thinking which divides the

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<sup>678</sup> *CD IV/2*, p. 98.

divine and the human, but only for a historical, which at every point, in and with the humiliation and exaltation of the one Son of God and Son of Man, in and with His being as servant and Lord, is ready to accompany the event of the union of His divine and human essence.<sup>679</sup>

In the divine movement of God that unites divine essence with human essence is found in the one will of Jesus Christ. In this man, in the power of Jesus Christ is the power of the omnipotent God. In the human death and passion of Jesus Christ is the final depth and self-humiliation of God as he secretly entered and traversed in this world from the start, which ended publicly in the ‘extremity of misery’ prepared for Him by God. Yet the glory of Jesus Christ is the exaltation of humanity to God. In the obedience of His human life is His triumph in His work of atonement, which is publicly revealed in His coronation having been resurrected from the dead (*CD* IV/2:116).<sup>680</sup>

In the work of the one Jesus Christ everything is at one and the same time, but distinctly, both divine and human. It is this in such a way that it never becomes indistinguishable. Where Jesus Christ is really known, there is no place for a monistic thinking which confuses or reverses the divine and the human. Again, there can be only a historical thinking, for which each factor has its own distinctive character. The divine and the human work together. But even in their common working they are not interchangeable. The divine is still above and the human below. Their relationship is one of genuine action.<sup>681</sup>

We observe here the structural union between God and humanity in Jesus Christ where the divine and the human work together, but are not interchangeable. As anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis the human nature has no capacity to act upon the Logos. Therefore, the divine Logos must act upon the human nature of Christ in this union. This is the movement of God from above towards humanity in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, which is realized in genuine and historical action.

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<sup>679</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 115.

<sup>680</sup> I greatly appreciate John Webster’s comments with respect to Karl Barth’s language of Christ’s reconciliation as being a present and real work. That is, throughout the doctrine of reconciliation Barth quietly argues against theological existentialism. Barth pressed that ‘questions of the ‘reality’ and ‘meaning’ of Jesus are a function of Jesus’ presence and activity, not of the historicity of the person of faith.’ Barth rejected the liberal theological notion that Christological language needs to be supplemented by descriptions of ‘cognitive, interpretive, or experiential acts’. Rather, Barth believed that our knowledge of Jesus Christ is ingrained within His reality as the ‘risen, ascended, and self-communicative one.’ More than any other modern theologian Barth shakes himself free from the presupposition that Jesus is past (cf. John Webster, *Barth’s Moral Theology – Human Action in Barth’s Thought*, p. 128).

<sup>681</sup> Cf. *CD* IV/2, p. 116.

## 6.4 Conclusion

We start by saying that Karl Barth's thoughtfulness and energetic thinking in his development of the exaltation of the Son of Man is a great theological achievement. It not only provides unique insight into the ontological character of the humanity of Christ, but it also brings to a great theological crescendo Barth's expression of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

In this context Barth does not shy away from a critique of the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ, and he does so through the ontological lenses of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature. While Barth recognizes the Chalcedon language to successfully safeguard against the extremes of Alexandria and Antioch, he pursues a path beyond Chalcedon, not as a contradiction, but as a more precise way to understand what it means to say Jesus Christ fully embodies very God and very man in His being. Grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis, Barth expresses the person of Jesus Christ not in the static being of very God and very man, but dynamically in the event of God's movement of grace towards humanity.

But Barth's greatest achievement in this context is his expression of the dynamic of the Son of Man who is brought into union with the Son of God through the revelation of Jesus of Nazareth. Barth uses the backdrop of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express the *hypostatic unio* as the ontological grounding for the union of divinity with humanity. Moreover, and interestingly so, Barth also uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express how the body of the Church is brought into union with its Head, Jesus Christ, to enjoy real subsistence in this union. Barth draws here a heavenly / earthly analogy of the Church and its union to Christ. In this way the Church of Christ manifests the form of Christ's earthly body (human essence), which does not exist independently from its Head. Therefore, it is its union with Christ as its head (divine essence) that determines the real existence of the Church, which in Barth's thinking is quite naturally expressed as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

## Chapter Seven – Conclusion

This dissertation clarifies Karl Barth's unique appropriation of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature as a dual ontological formula and demonstrates the significance of his adoption of these terms in his Christology; where Barth:

1. Adopts the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as a dual formula to express the human nature of Christ in a way that moves beyond the patristic Fathers and scholastics, and their treatment of these concepts as autonomous expressions of the human nature of Christ
2. Interprets and expresses the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, which he more fully develops throughout the *Church Dogmatics*
3. Develops Christ's human nature as the 'Word became flesh', based on the ontology of anhypostasis and enhypostasis, which functions as a dialectic to explain the union of divine and human essence in Jesus Christ
4. Expresses five themes of coalescence between the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ grounded in the ontology of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis
5. Critiques the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ through the lenses of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis where the humanity of Christ is exalted as the Son of Man

The concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis were first introduced into orthodox theology by the patristic Fathers to explain how the human nature of Christ exists in union with the divine Logos in defense of the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ as very God and very man. These concepts were also taken up by Lutheran and Reformed scholastics to explain the human nature of Christ, which were confirmed by the Lutheran and Reformed dogmatic compilations of Heinrich Schmid (Lutheran) and Heinrich Heppe (Reformed).

Following Bruce McCormack and his identification of the dual formula of anhypostasis and enhypostasis in Barth's Christology, F. LeRon Shults wrote an essay arguing that Barth misinterpreted anhypostasis and enhypostasis contrary to the patristic writers as he received it through the scholastic dogmatics compilations of Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe. Shults states:



My article argues that the innovative usage by those Scholastics was in serious conflict with the use of terms in patristic Christology, and that the uncritical acceptance of the formula by modern theologians has obfuscated the original meaning.<sup>682</sup>

Following Shults, U.M. Lang and Matthias Gockel wrote articles arguing that the protestant scholasticism that Barth worked through to develop his own understanding of anhypostasis and enhypostasis was very much in line with the traditional understanding of this teaching. Gockel states that:

...the theologians in the era of protestant orthodoxy who work with the concepts of *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* use these attributes strictly in relation to the *hypostasis* of the incarnate Logos and thus on the basis of the actual subsistence of Christ's human nature in the hypostatic union... To this end, they argue that Christ's human nature subsists due to its union with the incarnate Logos. Notwithstanding terminological nuances, the Lutheran as well as the Reformed scholastics consistently understood the term *anhypostasis* in contrast to *idihypostatos* and not simply as the negation of being as LeRon Shults suggests.<sup>683</sup>

I argue that in the patristic Fathers, the Lutheran and Reformed scholastics, and the dogmatics compilations of Schmid and Heppe there are consistent agreement that anhypostasis and enhypostasis are autonomous concepts to describe the human nature of Christ in union with the Logos.

Furthermore, the concepts of anhypostasis and enhypostasis are not used in historical orthodoxy as contrasting concepts to describe the human nature of Christ. Christ's human nature is united in the person of the Logos, and therefore cannot be thought of as anhypostasis, but rather becomes enhypostasis in this union. Anhypostasis is used to describe things that don't exist, and enhypostaton to describe things that exist per se or inhere in another thing.

Moreover, there is no departure or disparity from the language and thinking of Chalcedon in the use of these terms to affirm the definition: 'one person with two natures'.

Karl Barth, however, moves beyond historical orthodoxy in his understanding that the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis should be expressed as a dual formula to explain the human

<sup>682</sup> Cf. F. LeRon Shults, 'A Dubious Christological Formula: From Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth', *Theological Studies*, 57 (1996), p. 431.

<sup>683</sup> Cf. Matthias Gockel, 'A Dubious Christological Formula? Leontius of Byzantium and the Anhypostasis – Enhypostasis Theory', *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, Vol. 51, Pt. 2, October 2000.

nature of Christ. Barth understands that anhypostasis describes the negative aspect of Christ's human nature in union with the Logos. That is, Christ's human nature is understood to exist as both anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

What we therefore express as a doctrine unanimously sponsored by early theology in its entirety, that of the anhypostasis and enhypostasis of the human nature of Christ. Anhypostasis asserts the negative. Since in virtue of the ἐγένετο, i.e., in virtue of the assumptio, Christ's human nature has its existence—the ancients said, its subsistence—in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (hypostasis, “person”) of the Word, it does not possess it in and for itself, in *abstracto*... Enhypostasis asserts the positive. In virtue of the ἐγένετο, i.e., in virtue of the assumptio, the human nature acquires existence (subsistence) in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (hypostasis, “person”) of the Word. This divine mode of being gives it existence in the event of the unio, and in this way it has a concrete existence of its own.<sup>684</sup>

Karl Barth first expresses the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, which he more fully develops throughout the *Church Dogmatics*, where his dual formulation of these two concepts to express the humanity of Christ is unique to his Christology. Furthermore, Barth's interpretation of anhypostasis as a negative characteristic of Christ's human nature is a clear departure from historical protestant orthodoxy.

In his break with liberal theology came Barth's ongoing pursuit of a theological method, the impetus of which emerged from God's willing condescension towards humanity in His self-revelation in the God-man Jesus Christ. For Barth, this is the revelation of God in the movement of God towards humanity made manifest in Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>685</sup>

Michael Welker explains it this way:

Barth relentlessly emphasizes how human beings are incapable of attaining knowledge of God on their own initiative; because we are God's adversaries, because we stand in opposition to God, God must enable us *from within this very situation* to recognize that Jesus Christ is God's Son and our Lord. It is nothing less than a miracle that takes place

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<sup>684</sup> Cf. CD I/2, p. 163.

<sup>685</sup> I believe Michael Welker expresses quite simply and quite well how Barth understands the revelation of God when he says ‘God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ reveals God Himself! These statements both disclose and guarantee to faith God's love and beneficent inclination toward human beings along with his unconditional proximity’ (cf. Michael Welker, *God the Revealed*, p. 251).

in and with regard to the fallen world in this sense, for nothing less than a miracle is required to bring about this knowledge of Christ.<sup>686</sup>

Barth's discovery of the concepts anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to explain the human nature of Christ does not reflect a change in his theological thinking per se, but provides the ontological language to express more precisely his understanding of the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

Barth employs the concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to develop Jesus Christ as the 'Word became flesh' in the ἐγένετο where human essence is taken up into the being of the Logos. Interestingly, Barth uses anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis as an ontological dialectic to argue for the reality of Christ's human nature in dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed Christology, where the human nature of Christ must be understood as separate but not distinct in its union (i.e., its coalescence) with the Logos.

The concepts of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis therefore provide the ontological impetus for the themes of coalescence that Barth expresses in the union Christ's humanity with the divine Logos. It is in Barth's development of this coalescence that leads him off the beaten track of Reformed theology where Jesus Christ, as the self-revelation of God, is the mediator of reconciliation.

Ontologically grounded as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis Jesus Christ is both the electing God and the elect of God; the One in whom all humanity stands. In Jesus Christ is realized Jesus of Nazareth as the first Adam; the one in whom exists genuine humanity. In Jesus Christ is the convergence of humiliation and exaltation, of His person and work. In His union with the Logos, Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal redeemer.

The humiliation, therefore, is the humiliation of God, the exaltation of man: the humiliation of God to supreme glory, as the activation and demonstration of His divine being; and the exaltation of man as the work of God's grace which consists in the restoration of his true humanity. Can we really put it this way? We have to put it in this way if we are really speaking of the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ of *His* humiliation and exaltation, of *His* being and *His* work.<sup>687</sup>

<sup>686</sup> Cf. Michael Welker, *God the Reveled*, p. 264.

<sup>687</sup> Cf. CD IV/1, p. 133-34.

Barth draws all of this together in his critique of the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ through the ontological lenses of the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis; the nexus of his expression of these concepts. Barth makes a move beyond Chalcedon, not as a contradiction, but as his way to more precisely express what it means to say in Jesus Christ is the indissoluble union of very God and very man.

Grounded in the anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis of Christ's human nature, Barth expresses the person of Jesus Christ not as a static being of very God and very man (left open by Chalcedon), but dynamically in the event of God's movement of grace towards humanity.

Perhaps Barth's greatest achievement in his development of the union of humanity with the Logos is his expression of the exaltation of the Son of Man who is brought into union with the Son of God through the revelation of Jesus of Nazareth. Given the backdrop of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis Barth expresses the *hypostatic unio* as the ontological grounding for the union of divinity with humanity.

Moreover, and interestingly so, Barth also uses the concept of anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis to express how the body of the Church is brought into union with its Head, Jesus Christ, to enjoy real subsistence in this union. For Barth, just as the reality of Christ's human nature is realized in its union with the divine Logos, so too the Church enjoys real subsistence only in union with its Head, the person of Jesus Christ – very God and very man, which in Barth's thinking is quite naturally expressed as anhypostasis *and* enhypostasis.

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